

## Israel says 4 guerrillas killed

TEL AVIV (R) — Israeli soldiers killed four guerrillas Monday who crossed the border from Egypt and the army they were equipped for a large-scale attack. The guerrillas were carrying five AK-47 assault rifles, dozens of hand grenades, and large amounts of ammunition, the sources said. "Judging by the quantity of arms and material, it appears (the group) intended to stage a spectacular attack on Israeli soil," a military statement said. It was unclear to which organisation they belonged. Israeli Radio said the government would protest to Egyptian authorities about the incident. An Israeli army patrol in the desert discovered the guerrillas in the early morning and killed all four after a chase, the military sources said. There were no Israeli casualties. The sources said the guerrillas were carrying documents and large sums of money. The incident was the first serious violation of Israel's western border since November 1990, when an Egyptian border policeman attacked a number of Israeli vehicles, killing four Israelis and wounding 23. In March 1988, three guerrillas crossed the Egyptian border and attacked a busload of Israeli workers at a nuclear reactor. The guerrillas and three workers were killed when the bus was stormed by Israeli commandos.

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## Ghali leads straw vote at U.N.

UNITED NATIONS (R) — Egypt's Deputy Prime Minister Boutros Ghali Monday led an informal Security Council poll for U.N. secretary-general followed by Zimbabwe's Finance Minister Bernard Chidzero, diplomats said. Dr. Ghali received 11 votes while Mr. Chidzero got 10. They were followed by former Nigerian President Obasanjo with nine votes. The last so-called straw vote was held on Oct. 25. The United Nations is seeking a successor for Javier Perez de Cuellar, who wants to leave office when his second term expires at the end of 1991. In the October vote, Dr. Ghali and Mr. Chidzero tied for first place, with nine votes apiece. But Monday's straw vote for the first time allowed council members to cast negative votes and abstain, as well as positive votes. Dr. Ghali got only one negative vote and three abstentions, while Mr. Chidzero received two negative votes and three abstentions. The ballot on this round did not indicate whether a negative vote was cast by any of the five permanent council members — which would amount to a veto — since all ballot papers were the same colour. At a later stage, possibly on Tuesday, the five permanent members will use ballot papers of a different colour, making clear if a negative vote is also a veto.

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## Norway lets 10 stay after Mossad questioning

OSLO (R) — Norway agreed Monday to give residency permits to 10 Palestinians whose questioning by Israeli secret service agents during hearings for political asylum sparked a row. "They're not getting political asylum but they're getting residence permits on humanitarian reasons. We reckoned they could get problems if they returned to North Africa," said Arild Kjerfve, head of the directorate for foreigners. "We have also laid a certain weight on the fact that they were questioned by Mossad," he told NRK national radio. Norway's Chief of Intelligence Svein Urdal resigned last month after admitting Norway let Mossad agents help to question the 10 Palestinians. Norwegian police were unable to follow the conversations, which were in Arabic.

## Kuwait-U.S. joint exercise begins

ABOARD THE USS SAIPAN (AP) — The USS Saipan launched Monday the first group of U.S. marines and their equipment to Kuwaiti shores to prepare for a joint amphibious attack exercise with the Kuwaiti military. "We launched the first group this morning, but the main group is going tomorrow," said Eric Peterson, commander of amphibious Squadron 2. Some 2,300 U.S. marines, sailors and sailors aboard three U.S. navy ships will join Kuwaiti military forces in the 11-day exercise dubbed "Eager Mace". The training, scheduled to end Nov. 21, is being conducted under a recently signed defence cooperation agreement between the two governments.

## Bomb kills 17 in Kinshasa

KINSHASA (AP) — A bomb exploded overnight at a bar frequented by pro-democracy supporters and killed at least 17 people, witnesses said. The witnesses blamed soldiers of President Mobutu Sese Seko for the explosion, the worst single incident since unpaid soldiers rioted Sept. 23-24, triggering looting and unrest that has claimed more than 200 lives. The capital has remained in crisis, with most people either on strike or jobless. The government made no comment Monday on the bombing, which fuelled fears and insecurity in this West African nation where the dictatorial ruler of 26 years is locked in a battle for power with opposition parties.

## Former Afghan king leaves hospital

ROME (R) — Deposed Afghan King Zahir Shah has left hospital after treatment for wounds from a knife attack in Rome last week, a doctor said Monday. "The condition of the former sovereign was good so we were able to send him home and there won't be any need for further checks," Ercolo Brunetti, head of the first aid centre at Rome's San Pietro hospital, told reporters. He said Zahir Shah, 77, who was injured in the neck, upper lip and left hand, left the hospital Saturday. A bearded man posing as a journalist attacked him with a ceremonial dagger at his villa on the outskirts of Rome last Monday.

## Algeria's main Islamic party registers for poll

ALGIERS (R) — Algeria's main opposition party, the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), has registered for the country's first multi-party election without dropping a threat to boycott the vote, a FIS spokesman said Monday. The FIS has threatened to boycott the Dec. 26 vote unless its two imprisoned leaders were freed. They were jailed after fundamentalist street riots last June forced the postponement of Algeria's first democratic national election. "We have registered candidates," the spokesman said. With the deadline for registering candidates running out on Monday night, about 40 of Algeria's 36 legal parties had entered candidates, electoral authorities said.

## Masri's efforts to reshuffle cabinet turn more complex

By Nermeen Murad  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Efforts to form a broad-based government bogged down Monday, after a major parliamentary bloc declined an offer by Prime Minister Taher Masri to rejoin his government in a proposed reshuffle before the regular session of Parliament reconvenes in December. The refusal to rejoin a reshuffled or re-formed cabinet by the Jordan Arab National Democratic Alliance (JANDA), the umbrella organisation that groups most of the leftist-national groups, left the prime minister with the option of resigning or reshuffling the cabinet in partnership with the 18-member Constitution Bloc, which had asked Mr. Masri to set his sights on the broad-based coalition as a first option.

The Constitution Bloc, whose representatives met Mr. Masri yesterday, reported that the premier had told them he was unable to bring about a consensus among the different parliamentary blocs for a broad-based government, a source from the bloc said. The bloc, the second largest in the House, has been vying for cabinet seats with Mr. Masri's government and the support of his National Parliamentary Bloc for their House speaker candidate, Thagwan Hindawi. In an earlier meeting with Mr.

Masri and several of his ministers last week, a reconciliation between the two parties was in the works but the bloc made its participation conditional on a wider participation of parliamentary blocs in the government.

A statement issued by the Constitution Bloc said Monday the group had asked Mr. Masri to reshuffle his government with an eye on having a final makeup of "all parliamentary and national forces and organisations with a wide and stable parliamentary base."

The statement said that Mr. Masri had told the Constitution Bloc's representatives that his "consultations with the different parliamentary groups continued and that there was no final decision yet on a proposed reshuffle or re-formation of the government."

Mr. Masri's answer to the bloc Monday indicated, at least to some of the bloc's members, that his contacts with the Democratic Bloc and the Muslim Brotherhood Bloc had failed to convince them to participate or extend support in his government. Some parliamentary sources speculated that Mr. Masri was also having problems with his own National Bloc over extending the base of his government to include more deputies from the same group, but several sources within the bloc confirmed that the

"National Bloc will lend support to the premier under any and all circumstances."

The National Bloc sources denied that there was any conflict among its ranks and reiterated their stance in support of the government.

But problems within the ranks of the nine-member Democratic Bloc, which has been grappling with a political split inside its mother organisation JANDA as well as among its member deputies over the peace process, have been conveyed to the premier in a Sunday evening meeting.

The premier, according to parliamentary and JANDA sources, was informed Sunday evening that JANDA representatives can no longer remain in his cabinet. This decision was confirmed Monday in a JANDA meeting in which majority decision was adopted to pull out from Mr. Masri's government. JANDA has three ministers in Mr. Masri's government who are not members of the Lower House and could continue in their personal capacity if they wanted to. According to the sources, no final decision has yet been taken on whether this would also mean that the bloc would withdraw its confidence from the government.

Although Mr. Masri's government does not necessarily have to

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## Fateh, Syria discuss reopening offices

DAMASCUS (AP) — A delegation of the Palestine Liberation Organisation's (PLO) mainstream Fateh faction met with Syrian officials Monday in the latest step towards restoring relations fractured eight years ago.

Palestinian officials said they hoped talks with Syria Vice-President Abdul Halim Khaddam would result in reopening Fateh's office in Damascus for the first time since 1983.

Such a move, said Zaid Wehbe, Fateh's main representative in Lebanon, would aid in forming an Arab consensus for the second stage of U.S.-sponsored Middle East peace talks.

The talks, which opened in Madrid Oct. 30, are in recess but are expected to resume later this month.

"The main thing is how to coordinate," Mr. Wehbe said. "It must start between Syria and the PLO, then broaden to all the Arabs."

Reopening the Fateh office also could lead to better relations between the Palestinians and neighbouring Lebanon, he said.

The PLO has been at odds with the Syrian-backed government in Lebanon since the Lebanese army last summer dismantled PLO fighters as part of a programme to pacify South Lebanon.

Fateh, largest of the PLO factions, was forced to close its Damascus office in 1983 when the Syrians sided with disident Palestinians in a power struggle following Israel's 1982 invasion of Lebanon. PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat was banished from Syria.

Several attempts at reconciliation in the late 1980s failed. They began taking shape in April, when disident Palestinians in the Syrian-backed National Salvation Front called for a dialogue with Mr. Arafat.

Mr. Arafat returned on an official visit to Syria on Oct. 19 for the first time in eight years. He came again last week for talks with President Hafez Al Assad on the peace process.

Mahmoud Khalidi, the PLO representative in Syria, said Mr. Assad and Mr. Arafat agreed that any peace settlement must be based on U.N. resolutions demanding Israel's withdrawal from the occupied territories.

## Israeli allies bomb villages, blast houses

TYRE, Lebanon (Agencies) — The Israeli-sponsored South Lebanon Army (SLA) blasted with tank fire a village within the United Nations' zone of operations Monday. U.N. officials said at least six Lebanese civilians were wounded.

SLA foot patrols also punched north of Israel's self-proclaimed "security zone" and blew up two houses in the villages of Qantara and Hadatha, said Timur Goksel, spokesman for the U.N. Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL).

Security sources said another house in Yohmor in east Lebanon's Bekaa Valley was demolished by SLA militants at 1 a.m. (2300 GMT Sunday).

Qantara and Hadatha, on the edge of the "security zone," are within UNIFIL's zone of operations.

Security sources said the houses apparently served as hide-outs for guerrillas who have escalated attacks against the Israelis and the SLA since the Middle East peace process got under way last week in Spain.

Mr. Goksel said SLA gunners fired five shells from tanks in the

"security zone" into Hadatha, police by the Irish unit of UNIFIL, after the demolition of the house.

An Irish officer said the shelling targeted population centres, wounding six civilians, including a woman.

Speaking on condition of anonymity, the officer said three of the casualties were in critical condition, adding that none of the 14 Irish peacekeepers manning bases in Hadatha was hurt.

It was not immediately known what provoked the shelling, the first targeting civilians since Nov. 3, when the United States reportedly intervened to halt five days of massive bombardment of areas in the south and southeast of the country.

But security sources said SLA experts dismantled three roadside bombs in Aramta near the militia-controlled town of Jezzine during the night.

The earlier bout of bombardment in the south was prompted by a guerrilla attack that killed three Israeli soldiers on the eve of the Arab-Israeli peace talks which opened in Madrid Oct. 30.

## Cairo meeting reviews changed Gulf security plans

CAIRO (Agencies) — Eight Arab ministers reviewed amended security arrangements for the Gulf region Monday, including the controversial issue of whether Iran should participate.

The eight — foreign ministers of Egypt, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait and Bahrain and ministers of state from Oman and the United Arab Emirates — also discussed the Arab-Israeli peace process.

A post-refugee statement did not refer directly to security arrangements, nor to a role for Egypt and Syria in the Gulf. A document released by Cairo in August foresaw little role for the two Arab powers in protecting the Gulf oil states.

President Hosni Mubarak met with the ministers Monday before they began their day-long meeting, which was mostly in private.

After the meeting with the president, Syrian Foreign Minister Farouq Al Sharaa told reporters they discussed implementing the amended security arrangements.

"The Damascus declaration, in its final form and after it was amended at the request of some Arab states, has been approved by all eight Arab countries," he said. "We expect in the near future that the ideas related to aims of the Damascus declaration

crystallise into implemented protocols."

The eight countries signed the declaration in the Syrian capital on March 6, a week after the Gulf war ended. It aimed to establish a security apparatus for the oil states of the Gulf in light of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait last year that was reversed by the war.

Egypt and Syria were expected to provide the bulk of the 100,000-man force in exchange for financial aid.

The security arrangement went unimplemented as Kuwait and other Gulf states made known their preference for U.S. and other Western troops to protect them. Kuwait has since signed a military cooperation agreement with the United States.

Mr. Sharaa did not specify what the amended agreement looked like and said it was unlikely to be announced at the ministerial meeting.

The ministers' final statement mentioned only "hope for Arab unity based on the Arab League Charter and the Damascus declaration."

The statement said the eight had agreed to meet again in Qatar in the second half of April.

It made no reference to any security plan but Egyptian Foreign

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BIRTHDAY GIFT — His Majesty King Hussein, the Supreme Commander of the Jordanian Armed Forces, Sunday attends a celebration held by the Royal Guards on the occasion of his birthday which falls on Thursday. The Royal Guards expressed pride in King Hussein's leadership and the development achieved in the Kingdom under his reign. King Hussein was presented with an Arab sword as a gift from the force (Petra photo).

## Palestinians working on self-rule plans ahead of next round of talks

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Palestinian leaders, declaring that "the battle for peace has begun" said Monday they were working on plans for self-rule ahead of talks with Israel.

They also revealed that Arab states negotiating with Israel as part of the U.S.-sponsored Middle East peace conference would allow progress towards Palestinian autonomy even before their own differences with the Jewish state were settled.

Faisal Al Hussein and Hanan Ashrawi told a news conference Palestinian teams inside the Israeli-occupied territories and abroad were drawing up plans for the transfer of authority but they declined to give any details.

Mr. Hussein led the Palestinian delegation to the Madrid peace conference last week and Dr. Ashrawi was its spokeswoman.

They were greeted by thousands of Palestinians waving olive branches on their return Sunday.

Dr. Ashrawi called for an end to Jewish settlement of Arab land and urged Israelis to respond to the Palestinian olive branches with peace overtures of their own.

"(Madrid) is the beginning of a long and arduous journey... the battle for peace has begun," she said.

She said she would not disclose negotiating positions but she said Palestinians would not be content with running their own garbage collection and hospitals while Israel controlled the land and water.

The final objective of peace talks remained the end of Israel's 24-year-old occupation of the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem and the creation of an independent Palestinian

state, she said.

"We are not working on a detailed blueprint for autonomy. We are working on projects, several issues that have to deal with interim transitional arrangements, the transfer of authority from the Israeli occupation to the Palestinian people as a transitional phase before permanent status negotiations," Dr. Ashrawi said.

After eight months of diplomatic United States has coaxed and prodded Palestinians and Israelis to the negotiating table to discuss autonomy plans laid down in the 1978 Camp David peace accords between Israel and Egypt.

These call for a five-year transition to Palestinian autonomy with talks on the final status of the Palestinians to begin within three years. "What we are working on in

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## Talk of peace seen curbing uprising violence

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — Many Palestinian activists in the occupied territories are carrying olive branches instead of fire-bombs and attacks on Israelis there have fallen dramatically since the Jewish state and the Arabs began talking.

But Israeli security officials were careful not to suggest the halt might mark an end to the four-year-old Palestinian uprising which has been marked by stone-throwing, fire-bombs and gun attacks against troops and civilians.

"The same people who were throwing fire-bombs and rocks 48 hours ago are now waving olive branches. They could go back in 48 hours to stone-throwing and fire-bombs," an army spokesman told Reuters on Monday.

Clashes have fallen by 70 per cent in the Gaza Strip.

In the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, clashes between Arabs and Israeli soldiers have on average dropped by a third since the Madrid peace conference brought top Israeli and Palestinian faces face-to-face for the first time.

"The peace process began on Wednesday in Madrid and they (Palestinians) stopped throwing Molotov cocktails and stones," said Tami Paul Cohen, a police spokeswoman.

Instead she said Palestinians were waving olive branches, the universal symbol of peace.

The occupied territories are home to over two million Palestinians struggling for independence from 24 years of Israeli rule.

The chief Palestinian negotiator at the Madrid conference, Haidar Abdul Shafi, had forecast his people would curb their protests in response to reduced Israeli occupation and oppression.

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## Kurds say Baghdad ready to lift blockade if Peshmerga withdraw

SHAQLAWA, Iraq (R) — Baghdad has offered to lift the economic blockade of Kurdistan in exchange for a withdrawal of all armed Kurds from cities in northern Iraq, Kurdish leaders returning from negotiations in Baghdad said Monday.

Sani Abdul Rahman, the head of the negotiating team, said he thought Kurdish leaders could live with the deal despite possible opposition from some of the rank and file.

Baghdad imposed the blockade almost three weeks ago, apparently in an attempt to make the Kurds accept an autonomy agreement negotiated months ago but never signed.

Supplies of food and fuel to Kurdistan have dried up and government employees such as teachers, doctors and engineers in rebel areas have stopped receiving their salaries.

Mr. Abdul Rahman said that

under the new agreement all these restrictions would be lifted if the Kurds agreed to pull their Peshmerga (guerrillas) out of the cities.

"The agreement (would) normalise the situation in our cities. If it is implemented, I hope it will warm up relations between the two sides," he added.

The negotiations in Baghdad took place against a background of reports of Iraqi troop movements near major Kurdish cities including Erbil, Sulaimaniyah and Dohuk.

Fighting broke out on the edges of Erbil Sunday and sporadic clashes continued Monday.

But Mr. Abdul Rahman told reporters in the town of Shaqlawa the government troop movements were not on the agenda in Baghdad, even though he met Iraqi Defence Minister Ali Hassan Al Majied.

"The matter was not discussed," he said. "But I understand that it is not their intention to enter Erbil."

The Kurdish commander on the Erbil front said Sunday the Iraqis had sent him three messages warning him to move his guerrillas aside to make way for an advance on the city.

Half an hour after Mr. Abdul Rahman spoke, the sound of heavy artillery on the front could be heard in the centre of Erbil.

Kurdish leaders are scheduled to meet Tuesday morning to discuss the terms of the proposed deal with Baghdad.

Mr. Abdul Rahman is confident the agreement will be ratified by the Kurdish leaders.

He said the terms were well within the mandate the delegation took with it to Baghdad.

"It should take us a few days to implement the agreement, nothing more," he added.

## Fate of Zionism resolution hangs on talks

WASHINGTON (R) — President George Bush's bid to rescind the U.N. resolution equating Zionism with racism has become entangled with Middle East peace efforts and is being blocked by Arab states led by Egypt, according to a senior U.S. official.

Mr. Bush, in a Sept. 23 speech to the United Nations, pledged the United States to work for the two-thirds majority in the General Assembly needed to repeal the 1975 resolution.

"To equate Zionism with racism is to reject Israel itself. This body cannot claim to seek peace and at the same time challenge Israel's right to exist," Mr. Bush said in his speech.

At the time, U.S. officials said there was a good chance of rescinding the resolution soon since the Soviet Union, its former Eastern European satellites and many Third World nations no longer supported it.

But a senior U.S. State Department official told Reuters last week

week the United States was still not yet confident enough to bring the matter to a vote.

"If there was a straight up and down vote on a one-sentence resolution, then we have the votes," said the official, who asked not to be named.

But he said Washington was afraid that opponents of repeal could engage in procedural manoeuvres to frustrate the effort. They could try to add a series of anti-Israeli amendments to the resolution or seek to delay it.

"The worst thing would be to proceed prematurely and see the effort fail. We could end up with a motion that we ourselves could not vote for," the official said.

He said Egypt had emerged as the pivotal state in the issue with many other governments apparently prepared to take their cue from Cairo.

Although it signed a peace treaty with Israel in 1979, Egypt was anxious to avoid a rift with headline Arab states like Syria

over the "Zionism is racism" issue at a time when they were beginning their own peace talks with Israel.

The official said Egypt had told Washington it would only vote to repeal the resolution if there was some progress in the Middle East peace process. It had not defined what it meant by "some progress."

Bilateral negotiations between Israel and its Arab enemies, which adjourned last week after the Madrid Middle East peace conference, are expected to resume before the end of this month.

The official said Egypt's position was itself a softening since Cairo had previously insisted that Arab-Israeli peace be achieved before agreeing to support repeal of the resolution.

The "Zionism is racism" resolution was carried on votes of Arab states, the Communist bloc and much of the Third World.



## U.N. team to supervise Iraqi nuclear airlift to Soviet Union

BAHRAIN (AP) — U.N. experts flew Monday to Baghdad to supervise the airlift to the Soviet Union of non-radiated uranium Iraq was suspected of using in development of a nuclear weapons programme, a U.N. official said.

Arrangements have been made for Moscow to send a special plane to Baghdad Wednesday to carry out the first shipment the next day, said Alastair Livingston, regional chief of operations for the U.N. special commission.

The same plane will return to Baghdad on Nov. 16 to carry out a second shipment the following day, he said.

The Soviet Union is taking the enriched uranium under an agreement it reached with the Vienna-based International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Mr. Livingston said.

The 15-member team is led by Dimitri Pericos of the IAEA. The agency joins the U.N. commission in efforts to eliminate Iraq's nuclear, chemical and biological weapons potential as well as long-range missiles.

Mr. Pericos made the arrangements for shipment of the uranium while on an earlier nuclear inspection trip to Baghdad. Quantities to be shipped out have not been disclosed.

Mr. Livingston said that shipping the unprocessed fuel would be a relatively easy task compared to transportation of radiated material which is yet to be arranged.

Britain is reportedly ready to take the radiated material when ready for shipment by the U.N. teams in the next few months.

Bryan Barras of Britain's chemical and biological defence establishment flew to Baghdad with Mr. Pericos.

Mr. Livingston said Mr. Barras will discuss an Iraqi offer to deal with the highly hazardous task of destroying its chemical munitions, much of it leaking after heavy air bombardment by the U.S.-led coalition forces during the Gulf war.

To date, U.N. inspectors have listed about 46,000 of bombs, shells and rockets filled with chemical agents in Iraqi possession, as well as hundreds of tonnes of chemical agents including mustard gas and nerve gases sarin and tabun.

Large quantities of the contaminated stock are at Muthana facility near Baghdad.

A 50-member U.N. chemicals weapons team, led by Dutchman Marius Van Zelm, has just concluded a month-long stay in Baghdad where it set up special laboratories at Muthana for the destruction process.

The U.N. teams fly in and out of Baghdad through Bahrain, the regional centre for the commission. They use special U.N.-marked transport planes.

**Kuwait: No threat**

Kuwait's defence minister was quoted Monday as saying that chemical and radioactive weapons left over from the Gulf war did not pose a threat to the health or the environment.

"The Kuwaiti authorities are measuring the level of radiation periodically," Sheikh Ali Al Sabah told Sawt Al Kuwait daily.

"The level of radiation in the atmosphere and on land is within the normal range and doesn't call for worry or concern."

British reports said nuclear waste left on the Gulf war battlefield was a threat to the health of thousands of Kuwaitis as well as British and other Western cleanup teams.

The allied armies left at least 40 tonnes of depleted uranium in tens of thousands of armour piercing rounds fired at Iraqi vehicles from U.S. aircraft and British and U.S. tanks during the conflict, Sawt Al Kuwait said.

The Independent on Sunday quoted what it said was a secret British Atomic Energy Authority (AEA) report.

"There are certain kinds of weapons that contain radioactive material in Kuwait and with the armed forces," said Sheikh Ali. "They don't need special storage facilities."

"No radioactive waste has been stored underground and we won't permit that to happen," he added.

He said that some weapons with a small percentage of radioactive components were used in the Gulf war to strike against Iraqi positions.

"They don't constitute any danger because normal atmospheric conditions will ... force them (components) in the direction of the upper atmospheric levels where they will melt and disperse," he said.

## Hired assassin might have murdered Maxwell—lawyer

LONDON (Ageencies) — A lawyer acting for the family of media tycoon Robert Maxwell has suggested a hired assassin might have hidden aboard his yacht and killed him.

Mr. Maxwell, whose oaked body was found off Grand Canary Island Tuesday, was buried in Jerusalem Sunday.

"It is a possibility that an assassin could have been on board his yacht," Julio Hernandez Claverie, a Tenerife lawyer retained by the Maxwell family, said in Monday's edition of the British newspaper Today.

"It is possible Robert Maxwell was murdered."

He said: "I am expressing the concerns of Mrs. Maxwell and her children. They are sure he did not die of a natural heart attack."

Spanish authorities released Mr. Maxwell's body on Wednesday after provisional autopsy findings indicated he died of natural causes, possibly a heart attack.

The death certificate stated he died of cardio-respiratory arrest. Commenting on the findings, Mr. Maxwell's doctor Joseph Joseph said: "There is no sign of a heart attack per se. It was just an informed guess."

Spanish judicial officials have so far played down talk of foul play, noting there were no signs of violence on the body.

The death of the 68-year-old British publisher, plagued by debts and allegations of links with Israel's secret service, has sparked fierce speculation over possible foul play or suicide.

His widow, Betty Maxwell, told the Sunday Mirror newspaper she had considered the possibility of murder.

"I toyed with every possibility, that he had been pushed in by someone planted there," she said. "There were so many people who hated him. He had many threats. Many people would be delighted to bump him off."

She said: "He was a tremendous fighter. Suicide would have been totally out of character."

A Tenerife judge investigating Mr. Maxwell's death has ordered the crew of the newspaper magazine's yacht not to leave the Canary Islands pending further inquiries.

The Daily Mail newspaper said a top Home Office pathologist made a secret examination of Mr. Maxwell just hours before the burial.

It said Dr. Iain West flew to occupied Jerusalem to look for clues and to examine mark on the British publisher's head.

A spokesman at Mirror group newspapers confirmed the Mail's report saying Dr. West flew to Israel at the request of British insurance companies and with the full approval of the Maxwell family.

Mr. Maxwell's life is understood to have been insured for £20 million (\$35 million), insurance industry sources said.

Dr. West had hoped to carry out his examination in Grand Canaria, where Maxwell's body was taken after it was found in the sea Tuesday, but went to occupied Jerusalem instead to avoid delaying Sunday's funeral.

Dr. West is head of forensic medicine at Guy's hospital in London.

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PROGRAMME TWO	
18:00	Bouli
18:45	Celebration
19:00	Science Centre
19:15	News in French
19:30	French varieties
19:45	News in Hebrew
20:00	News in Arabic
20:15	Who's the Boss
20:30	Our House
20:45	News in English
21:00	French feature film
PRAYER TIMES	
06:35	Fajr
06:55	(Sunrise) Duha
11:15	Dhuhr
14:15	'Asr
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WEATHER	
Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.	
It will be fair and windy will be mostly moderate. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.	
Min./max. temp. 9/22	
Aqaba 8/12	
Dhaka 7/22	
Jordan Valley 17/22	
Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 21, Aqaba 27, Humidity readings: Amman 52 per cent, Aqaba 30 per cent.	

## Syria says Madrid talks just a start

DAMASCUS (Ageencies) — Syria described the Madrid peace conference as a start on Monday but said it would become a "non-sense" if Israel maintained its refusal to swap land for peace.

The English-language daily Syria Times said the United States would have to put greater pressure on Israel to persuade it to hand back Arab land seized in the 1967 Middle East war.

"For the Arabs, the Madrid conference was no more than a tiny start for a long and painful run that could be overturned at any moment as long as the Israelis keep talking about everything other than the land that has been occupied for 24 years," it said in an editorial.

"Although the conference in itself was not a waste of time... it could be changed into a nonsense if Tel Aviv's government insists on keeping the occupied lands."

Syria and Israel held face-to-face talks in Madrid just over a week ago but the meeting achieved little with Damascus asking for discussion of U.N. resolutions calling for Israeli withdrawal and Israel refusing the demand. Israel seized the Golan Heights from Syria in 1967.

The Syria Times said Washington would have to exert greater efforts to persuade Israel to implement U.N. resolutions 242 and 338, calling for an Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories.

"Any progress on the way of peace will require a great amount of intervention and mediation by the U.S. and the international community to make Israel yield to the requirements of peace."

A leading Egyptian newspaper meanwhile warned Arab delegations in Middle East peace talks to stick together and not do separate deals with Israel.

"One of the problems in Middle East peace talks is how to deal with solutions once they have been found since there are several parties negotiating at one time," the semi-official Al-Ahram newspaper said in an editorial.

"There must be continuous Arab coordination so that the Israeli dream of getting this party or that on its own is aborted," the newspaper added.

Egypt was ostracised by the Arab World when it became the first Arab state to make peace with Israel in 1979.

## Iran offers to mediate India-Pakistan rift

NICOSIA (AP) — Iran Monday offered itself as a mediator in the 44-year-old rift between India and Pakistan, Tehran Radio reported.

The broadcast, monitored in Nicosia, said the offer came in a meeting in Tehran between President Hashemi Rafsanjani and Indian Foreign Minister Madhav Singh Solanki.

Mr. Rafsanjani told Mr. Solanki that regional countries must beware of efforts by "enemies" to exploit differences among them.

He said Iran was prepared to "employ its full means to try and resolve differences between India and Pakistan," the radio said.

Mr. Rafsanjani told Mr. Solanki that conditions in the world required "independent countries like India and Iran to increase cooperation."

He expressed hope that the new government of Prime Minister Narasimha Rao would step up efforts to safeguard the rights of minorities in India, "so that Muslims can feel safe alongside the other minorities."

Mr. Solanki assured Mr. Rafsanjani that his government would do everything in its power to safeguard the rights of Indian Muslims.

He also extended a formal invitation from Mr. Rao to Mr. Rafsanjani to visit India.

**Calls for move on Azerbaijan**

An Iranian newspaper has called on the government to follow Ankara's recognition of Soviet Azerbaijan's secession from Moscow in an effort to threaten pro-Turkish sentiment in the breakaway republic.

The Farsi-language Jomhuri Islami daily said: "If a development is to occur (in Soviet Azerbaijan), Iran, due to the existing political, social and cultural ties, should utter the first word and play a key role in this respect."

Some four million Iranian Azeris share a common culture, language and religion with their seven million Muslims across the border in Azerbaijan.

Turkey on Saturday became the first country to recognise Azerbaijan's independence.

In excerpts carried by the Islamic Republic News Agency, Jomhuri Islami said the West was trying to instigate "pan-Turkish" sentiments, which it said must be thwarted.

The Iranians have been watching developments in the Soviet Union's southern republics with great interest.

Ethnic affinity and a relatively strong economy draws the Azeris to Turkey. But their cultural and political links to Iran are greater.

Early last year, rampaging protesters in Azerbaijan tried to break open the border with the neighbouring Iranian province, demanding unification with their kin.

Iranian officials fear that the call for the creation of "greater Azerbaijan" could inspire its own often restive Azeri minority to seek independence from Tehran.

Soviet Azerbaijan was acquired by Czarist Russia in the 1800s. In 1941, the Red Army moved into northern Iran and the Soviets set up a puppet state there.

It pulled out of Iran in 1941 and Josef Stalin sealed the border.

## Classes resume at AUB

BEIRUT (AP) — The American University of Beirut AUB resumed classes Monday as officials sifted through the rubble in search of documents that may have survived a powerful car bomb explosion that wrecked the campus last week.

AUB officials put the final estimate of destruction at \$200 million. One person was killed and eight were wounded in the pre-dawn blast Friday.

Nearly 5,000 students attended morning classes as employees clawed through the debris hoping to salvage files and documents belonging to the administrative department.

Administration was located in college hall which was demolished in the blast. Its tall clock tower was toppled and the university library was devastated.

Officials initially estimated the damage at \$125 million, but the figure increased after final assessment.

Lebanese Squad 16 riot policemen and Syrian troops in charge of AUB's security were seen frisking the students and checking their bookcases as they walked into the campus. Cars of the faculty and staff, the only vehicles allowed on campus, were all searched.

Police said investigation was carried into a fourth day to track down the culprits after the serial number of the car used in the bombing was recovered from the debris at the weekend.

No group has claimed responsibility for the attack.

## MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

**1,000 casualties from leftover mines, ammunition**

KUWAIT CITY (AP) — A Kuwaiti physician said Monday that 130 people were killed and 1,127 injured between March and May by mines and explosives left over from the Gulf war. Abdullah Al Hammadi said 27 per cent of the casualties were children who were killed or suffered various kinds of injuries while playing with unexploded leftover devices. Dr. Hammadi spoke at the concluding session of a seminar on the environmental and health impacts of Iraq's seven-month occupation that ended Feb. 26. The seminar was organised by the public health ministry and representatives from the Gulf Cooperation Council, which groups Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Qatar and Oman. Dr. Hammadi said that the number of casualties decreased after May, but dozens of other victims were reported between June and October. "Although the war is over, the killing hasn't stopped," he said. About 60 per cent of the desert country, including roadsides and former picnic sites, is still littered with mines or unexploded ordnance from the Gulf war. There are no guards to stop people picking them up. Explosives experts say it will take 18 months to clear the country.

**Britain promotes trade links with Morocco**

LONDON (R) — Britain is hosting an exhibition of Moroccan goods this week as part of a long-term plan to promote fast-growing trade links with the North African country, the Department of Trade and Industry said Monday. Britain's exports to Morocco have risen by 60 per cent in the past year, helped by an exhibition of British-made goods in Casablanca in 1990, it said. Britain's fastest growing market in the Maghreb, but there is still plenty of scope for growth in Anglo-Moroccan trade, said Britain's Trade Minister Tim Sainsbury as he opened the exhibition. Britain's exports to Morocco totalled £119 million in 1990, compared with £85 million in 1989. Imports from Morocco were valued at £106 million in 1990, up from £96 million the previous year.

**Libya confers highest order on Ho Chi Minh**

BANGKOK (AP) — Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi has conferred his country's highest order on the late Vietnamese revolutionary Ho Chi Minh, the Voice of Vietnam radio reported Monday. It said the Al Fateh Order was handed over Sunday to National Assembly Chairman Le Quang Dao by Libya's health minister. "The order was recorded in recognition of Ho Chi Minh as an outstanding leader of the national liberation movement in the world who set an example to all nations," it said. "It's also meant as a symbol of the traditional friendship between the two peoples of Libya and Vietnam." The visiting delegation is in Hanoi for a meeting of the Vietnamese-Libyan intergovernmental commission for economic and scientific cooperation, it added. Ho Chi Minh died in 1969. He founded the Indo-Chinese Communist Party and led the struggle against the nation's French colonial masters and later against the U.S.-backed government in the south. The former capital of South Vietnam — Saigon — was given his name after the communist victory in 1975.

## Canadian energy minister in S. Arabia

RIYADH (AP) — Canada's energy minister, on tour to explore the possibilities of Canadian stakes in oil and gas industry projects, arrived Monday in Saudi Arabia.

"We're looking for opportunities for Canadian service industries to develop joint ventures," he said Sunday.

Saudi Arabia, the world's leading oil exporter, is also keen on enhancing its search for other mineral resources in the kingdom including gold. Mr. Nazer also is minister of mining.

Qatar is a world leader in gas production, and is geared to develop downstream facilities and a gas-related industrial network.

Canada was a prominent member of the U.S.-led coalition forces that evicted Iraqi forces from Kuwait last February.

Three Canadian firms were later involved in the mammoth task of extinguishing Kuwait oilfields.

Mr. Epp visited the oil fields while in Kuwait and spent time with Mike Miller, leader of Safety Boss, one of three Canadian firms that alone put out 180 blazing wells after the Gulf war.

The delegation also is interested in exploring cooperation in the field of geographical information data. While in Doha, they visited the Qatari geographical information centre, set up a number of years ago by the Canadian Department of Energy, Mines and Resources.

The centre, and visiting Canadian experts, conducted remote sensing analysis of the devastating oil spill caused by the Gulf.

## It's a dog's life in Algiers, says paper

ALGIERS (R) — It's a dog's life in Algiers — literally, an Algerian newspaper commented Monday. The independent daily Al Watan published a picture showing a pack of stray dogs in front of the city's legislative building with the caption saying "Canine demonstration against dog's life in front of National Assembly." The government recently increased prices of milk, cooking oil, sugar, petrol and butane gas in an attempt to end soaring spending on subsidies and meet International Monetary Fund conditions.

## Way opened for Israeli legislator's trial

TEL AVIV (AP) — A parliamentary committee on Monday voted to lift the immunity of ultra-orthodox legislator Yair Levy in a first step towards allowing his trial for forgery and theft. If the full parliament votes likewise, it could create a political crisis since Mr. Levy's Shas party has threatened to withdraw from Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's coalition cabinet over the issue. If Shas withdrew the backing of its five legislators, Mr. Shamir would have 61 votes in the 120-seat Knesset. Shas toppled Mr. Shamir's previous cabinet in March 1990 by withdrawing its support over the peace process. The committee vote came at the request of Attorney General Yosef Harish, who wants to try Mr. Levy on charges of "managerial theft, forgery... false registration of corporate documents, and causing corporate harm by means of fraud." Israeli reports have said Mr. Levy was suspected of forging signatures on Shas party checks for hundreds of thousands of Israeli shekels. Mr. Levy has denied any impropriety, saying the money remained in party institutions, Israel Radio said. Monday's vote, 17 in favour with three abstentions, came in the house committee, which regulates parliamentary procedures. The next step is a secret vote in the full Knesset. Parliamentary immunity is intended to facilitate freedom in the conduct of legislative business. Mr. Levy would not be the first lawmaker to lose his immunity.

## Iranian quake injures 15, radio says

NICOSIA (R) — An earthquake in the southern Iranian city of Behbahan, rocked by a series of tremors in the past week, has injured 15 people, Iranian radio said Monday. The radio said the quake late Sunday had damaged residential and commercial property in Behbahan, in surrounding villages and in the town of Deh-Dasht to the north. The Iranian news agency (IRNA) said earlier that many residents of Behbahan had left their homes and were living in tents in the open. The latest quake measured five on the open-ended Richter scale and sent those residents still in their homes rushing into the streets, it added. "Tents have been set up on the city streets, parks and sports stadiums to lodge the residents," IRNA said. "Residents who have left their homes and are living in tents in open-air are reluctant to return to their fearful of fresh quakes." A quake measuring six on the Richter scale hit the city on Nov. 4. It injured 20 people and damaged many homes. Since then, some 70 tremors had been recorded in the area, IRNA said. A massive earthquake rocked northwest Iran in June 1990, killing an estimated 35,000 people and making half a million people homeless.

## U.S. police checking links in slayings of Libyan brothers

NEW YORK (R) — U.S. Police are investigating whether the slayings of two sons of a former Libyan prime minister, separated by 18 months and more than 5,000 kilometres, are more than just a bizarre coincidence.

Saud Othman Assed, 41, a son of Mohammed Othman Assed, Libyan prime minister from 1960 to 1963, was murdered in Cleveland, Ohio, on Nov. 2, police there said Sunday.

His brother, Abdesslem Othman Assed, was slain in a suburb of the Libyan city of Tripoli on June 20, 1990, family members said.

Both were shot to death in their cars. And both were slain with the same type of weapon, a .22 Beretta automatic pistol, another brother, Idriss, told Reuters in Rabat, Morocco, where the family lives in exile.

Idriss said Libyan authorities reported at the time that investigation showed Abdesslem was shot by his ex-wife.

But he said: "We do not know what the real motives for these murders are... we are very suspicious, it's just too much of a coincidence."

In Cleveland, homicide detective Robert Moore said that although a suspect has been arrested and charged with murdering Saud, police are still investigating in view of the brother's killing in Tripoli.

"We would think it is possible there might be some kind of connection there so we are still looking into it," he said in a telephone interview. "It seems odd, to say the least."

Mr. Moore told Reuters that Ali Shehadeh, a Palestinian, had been charged with murder and was being held in jail in lieu of bail of \$100,000.

He said the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) was also interested in the case. FBI spokesmen were unavailable for comment Sunday.

Saud, who is survived by a wife and small child, attended an Islamic cultural centre in Cleveland where he met Mr. Shehadeh three months ago.

## Iran returns bodies of Iraqis

NICOSIA (AP) — The bodies of some Iraqi soldiers who died in the 1980-88 war with Iran were returned home by the Iranian government Monday, Tehran Radio reported.

The broadcast, monitored in Nicosia, quoted an unidentified official in charge of Iranians missing in action (MIAs) as saying the corpses underwent a recently completed identification process. The number of bodies was not revealed.

He said the unilateral Iranian initiative was taken for humanitarian reasons, and in order to gain word about Iranians missing in Iraq.

"This initiative is a window of hope for those missing in action, who are presently in Iraq," he was quoted as saying.

He said if Iraq cooperated the initiative "could have positive results."

Some 38,000 prisoners of war (PoWs) were exchanged by both sides after Iraq invaded Kuwait.

## JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS	
NIGHT DUTY	
AMMAN:	
Dr. Yusef Saeghoun	615648
Dr. Wael Kharabli	665977
Dr. Yehon Abdel Rabie	766172
Dr. Kayed Hlayaga	793522
First pharmacy	661932
Ferdows pharmacy	783536
Al Asees pharmacy	675555
Nasrallah pharmacy	623672
Al Salam pharmacy	666730
Yacoub pharmacy	644945
Shamsal pharmacy	637660
Complaints	897467
Amman Municipality	787111
Telephone Information	121
(directory assistance)	
Overseas Calls	010230
Central Amman Telephone	
Repairs	623101
Abdullah Telephone Repairs	661101
Abdullah Telephones	731111
Radio Jordan	774111
Water Authority	680100
BEIRUT:	
Dr. Ahmed Abu Bakr	(—)
Al Shamsa pharmacy	(77322)
ZARQA:	
Dr. Khalid Shalhin	(—)
Khalid pharmacy	954117
Jordan Electricity Authority	815615
Electric Power Company	636381
RJ Flight Information	08-53200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport	08-53200
HOSPITALS	
AMMAN:	
Hussein Medical Centre	813813/32
Khalid Maternity, J. Amm.	644281/6
Al-Jalil Maternity, J. Amm.	645412/2
Al-Jalil, Abdull.	642362
Malika, J. Amman	636140
Palatine, Shamsal	664171/4
Shamsal Hospital	849465
University Hospital	667227/9
Al-Musaber Hospital	666127/67
Al-Jalil, Abdull.	664164/6
Al-Jalil, Abdull.	77101/3
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafiah	775117/25
Army, Marja	891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital	602240/50
Amal Hospital	664155
ZARQA:	
Zarqa Govt. Hospital	(09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital	(09)905560
Be Sun Hospital	(02)727225
Al Hiba Modern Hospital	(09)70700
BEIRUT:	
Pharasa Banna Hospital	(02)275535
Geek Catholic Hospital	(02)727225
Be Al Nafes Hospital	(02)76700
AQABA:	
Pharasa Hays Hospital	(03)314111

Other Flights (Terminal 2)	
05:00	Singapore, Kuala Lumpur (RJ)
05:30	Aqaba (RJ)
05:55	Muscat, Dubai (RJ)
06:20	Doha, Bahrain (RJ)
17:45	New York, Montreal (RJ)
17:55	Frankfurt, Belgrade (RJ)
19:20	Tripoli (RJ)
Other Flights (Terminal 1)	
19:35	Beirut (ME)
11:45	Buckhurst (MS)
MARKET PRICES	
Upper/lower price in \$/kg per 100	
Apple	600/265
Banana	350/450
Banana (Mukammal)	350/450
Beau	350/450
Cabbage	100/120
Carrot	220/170
Cauliflower	180/120
Cucumber (large)	180/120
Cucumber (small)	180/120
Eggplant	280/220
Fennel	300/250
Garlic	800/700
Grape	900/800
Green	300/400
Lemon	100/120
Marrow (large)	160/120
Marrow (small)	350/300
Onion	350/300
Onion (dry)	170/120
Pepper (hot)	320/260
Pepper (sweet)	450/400
Pepper (green)	300/250
Potato	400/300
Sage	600/500
Spinach	220/160
Sweet melon	270/230
Tomato	420/360
Watermelon	160/120



## Bread to be added to list of subsidised commodities

AMMAN (J.T.) — Bread is to be added to the list of food commodities sold to the public at subsidised prices through coupons issued only to Jordanian citizens, but the measure was not likely to take effect in the near future, according to Minister of Industry, Trade and Supply Ali Abul Ragheb.

For the present, the prices of bread for all citizens will remain the same, 75 fils a kilogramme, the minister said in a statement to Jordan Television.

He said that the government will maintain subsidies on rice, sugar and powdered milk and will add bread to the list.

By adopting this measure, the treasury hopes to save JD 5 million annually, said the minister. He noted that the government's subsidy on food stuffs now runs at JD 40 million annually, of which wheat is subsidised at the rate of JD 30 million.

Those who would not benefit from the measure, the minister said, are visitors to Jordan, restaurants, hotels and non-Jordanian citizens living in the country.

The minister called on the public to refrain from hoarding or stockpiling flour, noting that at least two to three months would pass before the government can finalise arrangements for the application of the new system.

At present, the price of regular bread remains at 75 fils a kilogramme, but according to informed sources, the price would jump to 200 fils a kilogram once the new system has been adopted.

However, citizens holding food coupons will continue to buy bread for 75 fils a kilo for up to 10 kilograms a month per person under the new system.



Her Royal Highness Princess Basma Monday visits villagers in Mafrqa Governorate (Petra photo)

## Princess Basma meets villagers, promises to address their needs and concerns

MAFRAQ (Petra) — Her Royal Highness Princess Basma Monday met with citizens at the social development centres in Al Rawda and Al Dafiane villages and discussed with them their social needs and the services the two centres could provide for them.

Speakers at the meeting reviewed the development achieved in Jordan under His Majesty King Hussein and affirmed that Jordanian citizens will remain united under King Hussein's leadership. The meeting discussed the role of social service centres in providing services for children and women and ways to implement training and productive programmes which aim at increasing incomes of families in the region by teaching women skills, enabling them to benefit from income-generating projects.

Princess Basma landed the citizens' enthusiasm during the stages of building the two centres and thanked them for their cooperation. She voiced hope that their cooperation and enthusiasm

will continue unabated when the two centres commence their activities in the near future.

Princess Basma stressed the importance of coordination among the various government departments and called for accelerating the process of constructing two charitable societies in the villages so as to take charge of running the two centres in cooperation with the Queen Alia Jordan Social Welfare Fund (QAF).

Several officials who attended the meeting expressed their appreciation to Princess Basma for giving priority to Al Mafrqa governorate in establishing such pioneering centres which promote teamwork and contribute to the development of society.

The population of Al Rawda Village is estimated at 2,000 people while that of Al Dafiane is estimated at 1,500.

At the outset of her tour of Al Mafrqa Governorate, Princess Basma attended the graduation ceremony of participants in sever-

al training courses at social service centres and charitable societies.

Mafrqa Governor Mahmoud Al Sari, who is chairman of Al Mafrqa Social Services Centre, delivered an address in which he voiced appreciation of Princess Basma's distinguished role in the field of social work.

The director of the social services centres in Al Mafrqa Governorate also delivered an address in which he reviewed the conditions of social centres in the governorate and the role they play in activating public participation in the developmental process.

He said the children's programmes which were carried out by the social services have so far benefited a total of 700 children and that the training programmes had benefited 200 women.

Princess Basma then opened a charity bazaar which included knitwear and handicrafts made by the graduates.

## Minister reassures industrialists on government's commitment to support local businesses

AMMAN (J.T.) — Burdens and obligations weighing on the government has forced it to try to reduce the deficit in the fiscal budget by nearly JD 80 million, said Minister of Industry, Trade and Supply Ali Abul Ragheb Monday.

By relying on the domestic revenues to achieve that goal, the government has imposed a consumer tax, said the minister at a meeting with a group of industrialists at the Amman Chamber of Industry. The industrialists had reacted angrily over the government's move and a series of meetings were held at the chamber to examine the situation.

At Monday's meeting, the minister assured the industrialists

that the government was keen on supporting all trends for investment in the industrial sector in Jordan and the ministry would do all it can to back the industrial development and help local industries find new markets abroad.

Mr. Abul Ragheb underlined the importance of cooperation between the private and public sectors in the course of overcoming the difficulties now facing the industrial sector.

The minister said that the government would re-examine a number of decisions that might impede industrial development and would introduce legislation that contribute towards boosting

the national economy. The Ministry, said, is considering an industrial sector scheme as a working plan for encouraging investments.

Referring to the heavy responsibilities and burdens facing Jordan, the minister said that the industrial sector can play a major role in boosting the economy and reducing the problem of unemployment.

The Jordanian industrialists had showed their opposition not only to the 10 per cent consumer tax, but also to a government proposed procedure to decrease customs duty on a series of imported products.

Particularly disturbing to manufacturers of low prices con-

sumer products such as chocolates and biscuits was the reduction in customs duty on similar imported products. Such reduction, they argued, will clear the way for the imported product to dominate the market at the expense of the local product.

Speaking at the meeting Monday, Chamber President Khalid Abu Hassan stressed the industrial sector's pledge to cooperate with the government to help stimulate the national economy and reach agreements through dialogue. Mr. Abu Hassan also referred to the negative aspects of the latest decision of imposing a consumer tax and their negative impact on the economy.

## March to help collect funds for cancer treatment units, raise public awareness about disease

By Elia Nasrallah  
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Jordan Cancer Society (JCS) is launching a campaign designed to help curtail the growing number of cancer cases in the Kingdom through its "Prevention and Early Detection of Cancer" plan.

As part of the campaign, the JCS is organising a charity march on Friday under the patronage of His Majesty King Hussein, honorary president of the society, on the occasion of His Majesty's birthday, which falls on Thursday. The march will start and finish at the Regency Hotel, the starting time is 9 a.m.

The society issued a statement appealing to the public to support the campaign and calling on Jordanian citizens to take part in the march.

"The JCS is in the process of expanding its public health education programmes for cancer, the society statement said.

The society is planning to launch an ambitious programme for early detection and prevention of cancer and this includes fixed centres and mobile units to help it carry out its project.

The early detection programme, it said, should have a clear impact on the health of patients by improving the cure rates. In order for the society to achieve these humanitarian objectives, the statement said, it needs all possible help it can get.

In the absence of a national cancer registry, all the figures regarding cancer prevalence and incidence are estimates from previous studies in Jordan and from adjusted international figures provided by the World Health Organisation (WHO). These indicate that 5,000 new cancer cases a year appear in the country, the statement pointed out.

It said that most common cancers in Jordan, based on a study of 2,034 new cases seen

at Jordan University Hospital in the 1987-1989 period, lymphoma, gastrointestinal tract, genitourinary tract (mainly bladder) acute leukemia, respiratory tract and lung, or breast for women. It said early detection of cancer dramatically improves the cure rate of most cases.

The march is intended to raise funds for the centre for prevention and early detection of cancer, which is expected to cost JD 1 million, in addition to treatment cost, said society President Mohammad Saeed Al Khatib. The JCS welcomes any contributions, which would help in the purchase of equipment needed for this vital project, Dr. Khatib said.

Dr. Khatib, who is also vice dean of the School of Medicine at the University of Jordan, said that Jordan University Hospital now treats between 150 to 200 cancer cases on a daily basis.

Through this plan and the march, Dr. Khatib said, the

society hopes to establish a register of cancer cases in cooperation with the Health Ministry and other concerned institutions to provide accurate information about the cancer situation in the Kingdom.

In its statement, the society said that the early detection programme aims to create public awareness of certain curable cancers if detected early, train medical personnel to be able to explain to the patient the methodology of early detection of each type of cancer and make available certain medical facilities for early detection in various parts of the Kingdom.

According to Dr. Khatib, the project will be carried out in two stages. The first stage, he said, entails setting up mobile units, while the second calls for creation of four stationary centres in Irbid, Zarqa, Karak and Amman.

The JCS, which was established in 1964, groups 200 members concerned with combating the killer disease.

## Committees working on plan concerning new federation

AMMAN (J.T.) — Committees entrusted with preparing a draft law on the Jordan Farmers Federation (JFF) Monday discussed practical steps to bring the law into force when the JFF replaces the existing Jordan Valley Farmers Association (JVFA).

According to Hassan Nabulsi, who heads the committees, nine farmers representing each governorate have been chosen to form a general assembly who would prepare the plan's final version.

The announcement about the creation of the JFF was made in May of 1990, when the minister of agriculture announced that the federation would group not only farmers of the Jordan Valley, but different farmers from around the country. Among the various tasks to be entrusted to the JFF will be the provision to farmers of their requirements of farming for their operations and the stabilisation of prices of agricultural products through and carefully studied plans.

Mr. Nabulsi said that the creation of the federation was deemed necessary in the absence of a general syndicate grouping all farmers and de-

fending their interests. The projected federation, he said, would help decision-makers work out agricultural policies and strategies related to marketing and credit to farmers.

The federation would also be expected to help rationalise the adoption of sound agricultural procedures and plans, offer guidance to farmers and help in the implementation of food processing industries, Mr. Nabulsi added.

According to Agriculture Ministry sources, the JFF will collect a fee of 1 per cent on all agricultural products and live animals imported by Jordan so as to help finance the JFF's operations and help local farmers produce more.

Participants in the meeting, which convened at the Professional Association Complex, decided to meet again to set up a higher federation council grouping eight persons representing various governorates in Jordan to supervise the work of the federation's activities and ensure the co-ordination between the JFF and concerned government departments.

## Minister calls on Zarqa factory owners to recycle water

ZARQA (J.T.) — Minister of Water and Irrigation Samir Kassar Monday called on factory owners in the Zarqa Governorate to recycle water at their firms and to introduce proper measures to protect the environment.

Such steps are essential to rationalise the use of water so that clean and potable water can be available in more quantities to the public, the minister said during a visit to the governorate where he inspected water projects and met with officials to learn about the water situation.

The government is seeking to carry out projects that benefit the largest number of citizens and is trying to make available sufficient funds for them, said the minister at a meeting with Zarqa Governor Mohammad Shobaki and other officials.

The minister reviewed with local officials the general environmental situation in Zarqa, environmental problems resulting from the concentration of a large number of factories along the Zarqa River and the effects of these problems on various crops and trees.

Discussions centered on the Khirbet Al Samra waste water treatment plant and the negative effects of the water leaking onto agricultural lands. The minister said that when a new plant, which

is now under construction, has been completed and becomes operational, local farmers would be allowed to use the recycled treated water to irrigate fruit trees in the area around the plant.

The minister urged factory owners to keep their treatment units operating all the time so that only treated water is used. He said a proper location should be found for dumping the solid waste material.

He also announced that the ministry was creating a special department, the Information and Education Department, to offer guidance services to the public about ways of consuming saving water.

The governor complained of environmental problems plaguing the Zarqa region, including the presence of factories that had been set up at random and without proper organisation. The result has been that the area now has environmental problems.

Later Mr. Kassar inaugurated Al Rawda water purification plant, which pumps 30 cubic metres of water daily. The plant director said that the plant, which cost JD100,000 was built by a private company.

The plant is the first of its type in the Zarqa region and its operation is supervised by the ministries of health, water and irrigation and industry and trade.

## Conference to examine ways of increasing fodder processing in Arab World

AMMAN (J.T.) — The second Arab conference on developing fodder processing in the Arab World will open in Amman on Nov. 25 under the patronage of His Royal Highness Prince Faisal Bin Al Hussein, according to an announcement Monday.

The announcement said that the four-day conference, which has been organised by the Arab Federation for Food Industries, (AFFI) in cooperation with the ministries of supply and agriculture as well as the Jordan Cooperative Organisation (JCO), will be accompanied by a general exhibition displaying various equipment used in the fodder

industry by Arab and foreign firms.

Subjects to be discussed include economic and technical aspects of the fodder processing industry, standards and specifications to be followed, production of fodder concentrates, modern trends in the production techniques and plans adopted for promoting the industry in the Arab World.

The organisers said that the conference was part of the ongoing efforts designed to evaluate the Arab fodder industry and boost the livestock wealth.

Several research and work-

ing papers to be discussed by the delegates feature Arab and foreign expertise on cooperation in the production of animal feed. The delegates represent ministries of industry, agriculture, supply and trade in Arab countries, organisations concerned with the fodder industry, Arab chambers of agriculture, industry and trade, Arab universities and individual Arab and foreign experts.

According to the organisers, the conference was expected to issue a set of recommendations designed to boost the fodder industry, which helps to increase the livestock wealth of the Arab world.

## Mohammad's Army trial nearing completion

AMMAN (J.T.) — The State Security Court in Marka has scheduled one more session for Tuesday to hear the testimony of the last two witnesses in the Mohammad's Army trial and the military prosecutor's statement.

At Monday's session, the court which is presided over by military Judge Youssef Al Faouri, heard the testimony of two witnesses, a radiologist at the military hospital in Zarqa and an orthopedist at Al Hussein Medical City in Amman.

The two witnesses testified that injuries sustained by some of the defendants were not the result of any torture at the military prison, but rather came as a result of various and harsh training in martial arts like karate and Tae Kwon Do.

Lawyer for the defendants had earlier alleged that the accused had been tortured and had sustained injuries in the arms and legs.

Court sources said that the judge on Tuesday might issue the verdicts after hearing the military prosecutor's statement.

## Libyan team in Jordan to recruit teachers

AMMAN (J.T.) — A committee sent to Amman by the Libyan government Monday started interviewing Jordanian teachers in the process of recruiting at least 700 of them to work in Libyan schools.

According to the head of the Libyan team, Mawia Awneih, the teachers are wanted to offer services to the secondary stage in Libyan schools.

Mr. Awneih, who is also director general of the Education Affairs Department at the Libyan Ministry of Education, said that his team was entrusted with re-

cruting teachers of physics, chemistry, mathematics, biology, computer science, and Arabic.

Mr. Awneih said that female teachers can also apply, especially those whose husbands are working in Libya. But, he added, their contracts would be drawn up in Libya and not in Jordan.

The Libyan team came to Jordan this year to recruit teachers for the secondary stage, well assured of the Jordanian teachers capabilities and efficiency, Mr. Awneih said.

Each teacher would be offered a monthly salary commensurate

with his or her qualifications and experience plus a housing facility appropriate to single and married teachers.

He said that teachers will be allowed to transfer home half of their salaries in hard currency through legal and proper channels in the Libyan banks.

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## WHAT'S GOING ON

### EXHIBITIONS

- ★ Exhibition entitled "The Arab Traditional House, Selected Items of our Heritage" by Hana Sadeq Bardon at Beladna Gallery, Gardens Street.
- ★ Exhibition entitled "Graphic Arts of the 60s" (from the Federal Republic of Germany) at the Abdul Hammed Shoman Foundation gallery (opens from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.).
- ★ Exhibition of traditional embroidery and handmade items at the Marriott Hotel.
- ★ Exhibition of paintings depicting scenes from Aqaba and Jordan by Jordanian artist Kamal Shahawi Yassin at the Housing Bank Gallery.
- ★ Exhibition by Iraqi artist Samira Abdul Wahab at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Art exhibition by Ibrahim Shalabi at Al Orthodox Club.
- ★ Exhibition of maps and aerial photos organized by the Royal Geographic Centre at the University of Jordan.
- ★ Exhibition of sculptures, ceramics and paintings by 76 Iraqi artists at the Royal Cultural Centre.

### CONCERT

- ★ Recital by renowned German pianist Christian Koln at the Royal Cultural Centre — 8 p.m.



Abdul Hamid Abu Shaqra Monday congratulates trainees who recently finished training course

## Abu Shaqra praises trainees

AMMAN — Participants in a training course organised by the Abu Shaqra Trade Centre in Amman received their diplomas at a ceremony held under the patronage of Abdul Hamid Abu Shaqra, chairman of the board of directors of the Abu Shaqra Trade Centre.

The trainees were employees at pharmacies and sales representatives employed by the Abu Shaqra Trade Centre.

The course was arranged by the Abu Shaqra Trade Centre in cooperation with the Ellen Betrix International Firm for Cosmetics under the supervision of the German beautician expert, Petra Scholl.

### HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

#### King congratulates Japan

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Monday sent a cable to Japanese Emperor Akihito to congratulate him in his name and on behalf of the Jordanian government and people on his coronation day anniversary. King Hussein wished Emperor Akihito good health and happiness, and the Japanese people further progress and prosperity.

#### Library seminar to be held

AMMAN (Petra) — A seminar on the conditions of libraries in the occupied Arab lands opened at the Royal Cultural Centre Monday. The three-day seminar, which is organised by the Jordanian Libraries Society in cooperation with the Iraqi Society for Libraries and Information, will discuss issues related to libraries and information centres in the occupied territories and obstacles impeding their work. A total of 16 working papers will be presented by researchers from the occupied territories.

## ABU SHAQRA TRADE CENTRE AL RA'ED COMMERCIAL AGENCY

German beautician Petra Scholl  
Director of the training centre at Ellen Betrix Company will have the honour of receiving you in

At Shmeisani branch  
at Abu Shaqra Establishment  
to examine your complexion and give advice and directions on taking care of your skin and beauty free of charge on Tuesday from 3-7 p.m. and on Wednesday from 9:30 a.m. till 1 p.m. and 3-7 p.m.  
All are welcome



## Jordan Times

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## U.S. sees Mideast peace efforts resuming soon

By Alan Elsner  
Reuters

WASHINGTON — Middle East peace talks have taken a brief time-out while Arabs and Israelis assess the results of the opening round in Madrid but U.S. officials are confident negotiations will resume later this month.

"The momentum that has been achieved at Madrid will continue. The parties have shown determination, a great deal of courage on the part of both the Israelis, the Arabs, the Palestinians to make some hard choices and hard decisions," said Edward Djerejian, assistant secretary of state for Near Eastern Affairs, in a televised interview last week.

"There was a momentum there and an intention to see if they can resolve their differences and proceed with the next steps in the peace process."

After a brief pause last week while the parties took stock, diplomatic contacts have resumed to determine where to hold three separate groups of bilateral negotiations matching Israel with Syria, Lebanon and a joint Jordan-Palestinian delegation.

While Israel originally wanted the talks held in the Middle East — to symbolise its own acceptance by Arab countries — and the Arabs wanted them in Madrid, both sides seem to recognise that they will have to compromise.

Secretary of State James Baker has given them two weeks to try to solve the problem themselves. If they fail, as seems likely, Washington will put forward its own solution.

Among possible sites mentioned by Israeli and Palestinian sources are Washington, Williamsburg, Virginia, and Ottawa.

In addition, the United States is working hard to convene regional Middle East talks on issues like arms control, sharing water, trade, the environment and refugees.

### NEWS ANALYSIS

Syria opposes these talks until Israel starts withdrawing from occupied territories and has urged other Arabs to stay away.

At least 12 Arab states and a variety of other countries say they would attend such a meeting.

If the regional gathering takes place, it is certain to take on considerable symbolic value as another high-profile move to reconcile Arabs and Israelis.

In fact, if Madrid proved anything, it showed that Syria has no veto over the general Arab position and that Palestinians feel able to set their own pace in the talks.

The Syrians dragged their feet until the last minute about starting face-to-face negotiations with Israel last Sunday but found themselves isolated when the Palestinian-Jordanian delegation went ahead without them and held two sessions with the Israelis.

The Palestinians, who face a grim political and economic future under occupation unless they can negotiate some form of self-rule with the Israelis, are eager to move ahead quickly.

Syria, which sees little prospect of regaining the Golan Heights

that Israel took from it in the 1967 Middle East war, is more suspicious.

"The Israelis and Palestinians were the big winners. The conference demonstrated these were the parties who really wanted to get down to business," said Martin Indyk, director of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy.

The Israelis, Jordanians and Palestinians praised the atmosphere that prevailed in their meeting and even issued a joint statement. The Syrians refused to shake the hands of their Israeli enemies, but the Palestinians and Jordanians did so.

This does not mean Israeli-Palestinian talks will be easy. In fact, Palestinian sources in the United States said they expected the Israelis to be extremely rigid

and hardline when the talks got down to substance.

But there is at least an agreed basis on which to talk. And in the form of the Israeli-Egyptian negotiations on Palestinian autonomy held from 1979 to 1982, there is an established record of discussion which did manage to define some areas of agreement before ultimately failing.

Whatever happens, the process is going to need very strong U.S. involvement to avoid early deadlock.

Former President Jimmy Carter, who orchestrated the tortuous talks that produced the historic Middle East peace accord between Israel and Egypt said: "Without the U.S. playing a very strong role, on a step by step basis, I think it'd be highly unlikely that they'd make progress."

## Multilaterals under lens

SHOULD multilateral regional talks between the Arabs and the Israelis wait until the bilateral peace negotiations produce some tangible results, as the Syrians insist, or should they run parallel, in order to supplement each other, as Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin argued Saturday?

There are arguments both in favour and against the two propositions. There is logic in the first proposition in that the third stage multilateral negotiations need to await the stimulus of the second stage bilateral talks. Otherwise the perspective on the Arab-Israeli negotiations would appear to be lopsided as it would endeavour to put the cart before the horse. After all the differences that exist between the two sides on such multilateral matters have emerged principally because of the political and military confrontations that existed between them over the past decades. In this context, it makes sense to try to first contain the direct Arab-Israeli conflicts over the Palestinian case and other related situations that ensued from it before indulging in the ambitious programme that aims to settle the string of multilateral disputes that unhappily persist in the Middle East region, be they related to water or disarmament or environmental considerations. On the other hand, there is equal logic in pursuing the two sets of negotiations between the Arab side and Israel concurrently albeit in a parallel form. As the stakes in the multilateral subjects are indeed great for both camps, there is every reason to conclude that the simultaneous handling of these concerns stands to strengthen rather than weaken the bilateral talks. It is hard to tell in advance which level of parleys could serve as the necessary bait for the other, and the only way to determine this matter is not to let one set of negotiations to preempt the other.

Only concurrent negotiations over bilateral and multilateral conflicts would offer the guarantee that there is indeed an organic link between the two levels of negotiations by making progress on one dependent on success on the other.

Seen against this background, it should not be too difficult to reconcile the differences between the Syrian and Israeli perspectives on how to proceed with the next phases of negotiations between Israel and the Arab parties by overcoming the apparent impasse on this basis. Damascus is on record as seeking progress on the two fronts of the negotiations as soon as possible. All the other Arab parties are in agreement with it on this goal. Israel, on the other hand, appears to seek progress on the multilateral issues independently of any meaningful negotiations on the central conflicts that divide the Arabs and Israelis. Unless and until Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin yields to common sense and accepts to push forward with the bilateral talks in a serious way, there could be little room for any real progress on the other regional issues. What really matters in the final analysis is the seriousness of Israel to conclude a just and durable peace accord on the Palestinian question. Once this issue is resolved to the satisfaction of all sides, the current deadlock over the modalities of the next negotiations need not talk much time and effort to break.

## ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

ON NOV. 22 U.N. Security Council Resolution 242 will have reached the age of 24, thanks to Israel's continued rejection of the international legitimacy and Washington's continued support to Israel's stand, said Al Ra'i Arabic daily Monday. Let us put aside the thought about the barbaric aggression launched in Iraq to force it to respect the U.N. Security Council resolutions and to force its troops to leave Kuwait, and let us turn our attention to the question of why did not the United States and the European countries impose a similar measure on the Israelis all these years in order to force them to comply with the international legitimacy, the paper said. At the Madrid peace conference all the parties, except for the Israelis, demanded that the U.N. resolutions be implemented and that Israel recognise the rights of the Palestinian people by withdrawing its troops from the territories they occupied in 1967, the paper said. Furthermore, plans for the continuation of the peace conference through bilateral and then multilateral talks express the world community's desire to implement Resolution 242 and force the Israelis to halt their settlement programme in the occupied Arab lands, the paper continued. It said that unless that happens, and unless occupied lands are liberated, the whole process will be considered no more than a farce and a tool with which the Western countries want to keep the Arabs busy and forget the barbaric aggression launched against their Iraqi brothers.

THE government's decision to impose a consumer tax on all locally manufactured products came as a severe blow to the national industry and did a great deal of harm to national interests, said a columnist in Al Dustour daily Monday. If the government is forced to take this step in compliance with conditions imposed by the International Monetary Fund to help the country carry out the economic restructuring programme, the government should have at least consulted with Parliament, said Mohammed Dawood. The writer said it was surprising to see such measures being adopted by the government as the national efforts, and specifically those of the government, are directed towards boosting national production and enabling Jordanians to become self-sufficient and self-reliant. By imposing this tax on local goods, and reducing taxes on imported ones, the government is inviting the public to buy foreign products and ignore the local goods, he argued. Furthermore, such a measure is bound to frighten off investors and help the flight of capital which is most needed at this particular moment when the Kingdom is still grappling with the consequences of the Gulf crisis and trying to bolster the national economy, the writer said. By taking the measure, the writer said, the government has ignored the industrial sector which is bound to suffer a great deal, and abused the concept of democracy by shunning consultation with Parliament. The writer said that the government should rather set a good example to the public by consecrating democracy rather than abusing power.

## Bush may have a winner here

By Robert E. Hunter

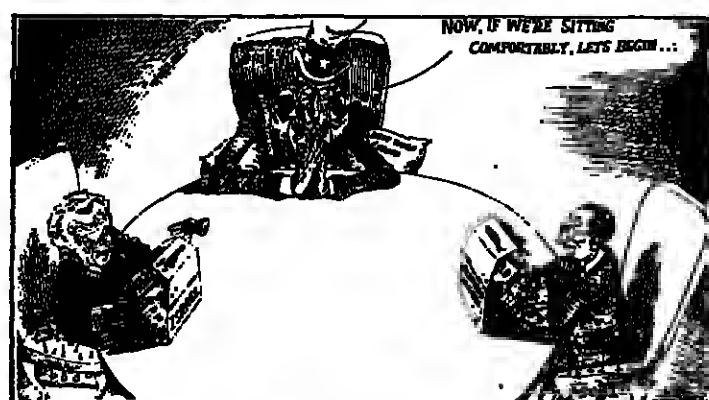
IN recent months, the United States has been reducing its strategic engagement worldwide — everywhere, that is, but the Middle East. When President George Bush opened the Arab-Israeli peace conference in Madrid, he was making a major gamble that would either confirm U.S. primacy in the region or promote new risks to U.S. interests.

With its twin victories in the cold war and the Gulf, the United States has been reducing its strategic engagement worldwide — everywhere, that is, but the Middle East. When President George Bush opened the Arab-Israeli peace conference in Madrid, he was making a major gamble that would either confirm U.S. primacy in the region or promote new risks to U.S. interests.

These facts matter to the United States for the same reason that Mr. Bush sent half a million troops to the region last year: to guarantee the flow of oil.

The Gulf has become the locus of the most palpable challenge to a critical U.S. strategic interest: the energy supply. Today, that challenge is not posed by Iraqi aggression, though President Saddam Hussein remains a brooding menace, but by the aftermath of Desert Storm: the continuing possibility of a backlash, of new instabilities in the region in the wake of Western military victory over an Arab Nation.

More than anything else, con-



cern for reducing the long-term risks to oil explains the commitment of President Bush — himself an oil man — to prosecute Arab-Israeli peacemaking. Indeed, the traditional U.S. motives for trying to unravel the world's most complex diplomatic problem are now absent. There is currently no threat of Arab attack on Israel or of Soviet expansion into the region.

Like it or not, the continuing dispute over Jerusalem and the fate of the Palestinians is the touchstone of Arab politics, a critical factor in regional stability and the single most important long-range determinant of U.S. standing in the region. At the moment, that standing is at its all-time peak, as is America's pre-eminence as the sole great power in the Middle East, to a degree unmatched by any other country for at least the past two centuries.

By going to Madrid, Mr. George Bush was thus exploiting America's unusual position and committing an act of rare statesmanship: building for the long-term rather than responding to the moment. His focus on Arab-Israeli diplomacy has been made necessary in part because of U.S. frustration over alternative means of promoting regional sta-

bility. The United States has concluded defence agreements with Kuwait and Bahrain, but these do not guarantee tranquility in the Gulf. Indeed, Saudi Arabia is again becoming wary of a permanent U.S. military presence and is asking that U.S. weapons and ammunition stockpiled for Desert Storm either be removed or sold to Riyadh. And as the hostage crisis in Lebanon falls short of resolution, Mr. Bush has been stymied in his efforts to repair U.S. relations with Iran, a nation key to the regional balance.

In addition, the president has become locked in a dilemma of his own making. He has vowed not to lift sanctions against Iraq so long as President Saddam Hussein remains in power, but the Iraqi leader refused to go. Nor will he accept the United States' permission to sell \$1.5 billion worth of oil and thereby relieve the plight of his people, whose situation is increasing international pressures to end sanctions altogether. Uncertain of winning this test of wills but needing to show U.S. competence as the arbiter of regional security, Mr. Bush has turned to the Arab-Israeli issue.

The prospects that Mr. Bush's gamble will succeed — that the Arab-Israeli conflict can be

moved toward resolution — are better than at any other time since President Jimmy Carter left office. The PLO has not fully recovered from its loss in backing President Saddam Hussein. The Soviet Union is a U.S. ally. And everyone who matters has accepted the U.S. invitation to Madrid — all are in the tent, and no one important is outside.

Secretary of State James Baker has also crafted the best possible strategy. By getting Israelis in the same room with Palestinians and Syrians, Mr. Baker hopes that psychology will begin to change, as happened in both Egypt and Israel after Anwar Sadat went to Jerusalem in December, 1977. In the months after Madrid, Israel and its negotiating partners will wrangle about specific issues, but two critical decisions could emerge. Syria may decide that it has more to gain from ending hostilities than from playing the spoiler, and Israel may decide that it prefers peace to keeping all of the West Bank. All other questions are secondary.

The necessary breakthrough in psychology can be achieved only through time, patience, the deep and continual involvement of the United States. Success is far from assured. But by going to Madrid, Mr. Bush has staked his regional reputation on Arab-Israeli diplomacy and confirmed that the United States will remain a Middle East power for the indefinite future. Long-term American interests throughout the region will be critically affected by the results.

Robert E. Hunter, vice president for regional programmes at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, was an Arab-Israeli peace negotiator in the Carter Administration. The above article is reprinted from the Los Angeles Times.

## British society in reflective, rebellious mood ahead of election

By Anne Senior  
Reuters

LONDON — Britain is taking a long, hard look at its time-honoured institutions — from parliament to the police — and finding it doesn't always like what it sees.

After more than a decade under the thrall of leader Margaret Thatcher, who preached pride in her country, some people in Britain are starting to voice doubts about the very traditions for which they are most famous abroad.

The monarchy with all its pomp and circumstance, the ermine-clad peers of the House of Lords and the much-vaunted "mother of parliaments" may all pull in the tourists but are they doing a good job for Britain?

Does the system serve the people or the powerbrokers? An impending general election and the prospect of European union are focusing minds more sharply on Britain's power structure, long a source of pride but now attacked by some as undemocratic and out of date.

The debate pits traditionalists against reform groups and crusading elements of the media who are calling for sweeping changes including a written constitution and electoral reform.

Opinion polls suggest the reformists are winning support, although sceptics say intellectuals may be exaggerating the mood of change.

The finger of doubt is also pointing at other cornerstones of British society — police and the law — after a series of overturned verdicts showed the justice system which served as a model to many other countries can go badly wrong.

The ultimate question is whether the British would ever sacrifice parts of their heritage for an untried alternative. These are some of the issues:

### A written constitution and a bill of rights.

Charter 88, a pressure group armed with more than 20,000 signatures, and civil rights group Liberty are calling for a written constitution to set limits on parliamentary power and a bill of rights to enshrine people's basic freedoms.

The ruling Conservatives, led by Mrs. Thatcher's successor Prime Minister John Major, generally oppose such moves and say Britain's unwritten constitution — a combination of statute, convention and common law — works fine as it is.

Political analysts say the calls to curb government power are partly a reaction to the Thatcher years. The "iron lady" implemented many radical policies virtually unchecked because of her large parliamentary majority.

Bernard Crick, emeritus professor of politics at London University, set out the case for reform in Tuesday's Times newspaper, which is emerging as another forum for debate along with the Independent newspaper and the Economist magazine.

We need a constitutional jurisdiction. Neither the machinery of government nor the liberties of the subject should be the plaything of temporary, desperate and usually unpopular, and always unrepresentative parliamentary majorities," he wrote.

Opponents charge this could take power away from members



John Major

of parliament and give it to unelected judges.

### Electoral reform

This has become a national issue again as the balance of power at the next election, due by July 1992, could lie with the Liberal Democrats, a minority party committed to introducing proportional representation.

Elections to the House of Commons, the Lower Chamber, have always been on a first-past-the-post principle where the winner in each local constituency is returned to parliament.

Critics charge this is too crude a form of democracy for a modern state because it concentrates power in dominant parties and works against inter-party consensus.

As usual at election time, the future of the House of Lords is again in question. The opposition Labour Party, now ahead in opinion polls, has promised to scrap the unelected Upper Chamber of Peers of the realm and senior clergy as an outmoded bastion of privilege.

### The monarchy

Although Queen Elizabeth, Britain's head of state, is a popular symbol of national unity, the monarchy's place in modern society is being keenly disputed. A recent opinion poll found strong favour for the queen — but 22 per cent thought Britain did not need royalty and more than half thought it did not represent a good example of family life.

Assemblies for Scotland and Wales and the English regions. This is favoured by opposition parties but rejected by the government.

### The legal system

The government has ordered a review of the whole judicial system after long-standing convictions in cases of Irish guerrilla bombings, such as that of the "Birmingham six" who spent 17 years in prison, were overturned as miscarriages of justice.

The cases hinged on police interviews and forensic evidence, and the quashing of the convictions has called police integrity into question.

Rising crime rates and urban riots have also contributed to a crisis of confidence in the British "bobby."



## Reshuffle efforts turn more complex

(Continued from page 1)

go through a confidence vote when the regular session of Parliament reconvenes in early December (unless ten deputies move a motion to that effect), the signing of a petition in October by 49 deputies withdrawing confidence from the Masri government has underlined the need to mend fences between Parliament and the government before Parliament reconvenes.

The petition carried the signatures of the 23-strong Muslim Brotherhood Bloc, the Constitution Bloc, independent Islamists and a few members of the Democratic Bloc.

With the Muslim Brotherhood bloc, and three independent Islamists, taking an ideological stand in opposition to Arab-Israeli peace negotiations and the support of their stance by a few independents, many parliamentarians say that any government would have to deal with a basic formula which places around 35 parliament members in opposition to any government which would continue with the peace talks with Israel.

It was not clear what the next step would be, although the premier was reportedly losing patience with the different "unrealistic" conditions placed by the different parliamentary blocs approached by the premier.

The Democratic Bloc, according to sources, has placed conditions on the premier which would require "dropping the peace process with Israel, ignoring interna-

tional Monetary Fund agreements with Jordan and allowing for wider public freedoms and democracy."

According to a cabinet member, JANDA members "should know that the decision to participate in the peace process is one of the pillars of Jordan's foreign policy and they should understand that Jordan has to reach agreement with international leading agencies to reschedule its national debt."

Based on this (Jordan's) conditions are just another way of saying we want out," the minister said.

The Constitution Bloc, which has not yet presented any specific conditions for its participation beyond its demand for a broad-based government, may still reach agreement with the premier "if more contacts and discussion took place between us and the government," according to one of their sources.

Several parliamentary sources contacted by the Jordan Times said Mr. Masri should not be dissuaded by the size of the opposition but rather be should "capitalise on the 45 votes which remain for any prime minister who seeks a peaceful settlement of the Palestinian problem."

These and other parliamentary sources say that although there is group opposition to the present government in Parliament, individual deputies from all groups want the prime minister to stay in office and many of them are privately encouraging him to do so.

## Talk of peace curbs violence

(Continued from page 1)

Gaza college lecturer Farouq Al Farra said: "This alleviation in the intensity of the public expression of giving peace a chance."

Since the conference began on Oct. 30, attempted attacks on Israeli targets have fallen on average by 40 per cent in the West Bank where more than 100,000 Jews live in enclaves among a million Palestinians, the army said.

Troops imposed curfews to pre-empt violence in some places during the conference, especially in Gaza where Arab backers and opponents of the peace conference had fought.

Muslim fundamentalists and communists opposed to peace efforts have called for more anti-Israeli violence.

On the eve of the Madrid conference, two Israelis were shot dead by unknown assailants who opened fire on buses in the

West Bank. Pro-Iranian guerrillas have killed six soldiers and wounded 11 in Israel's self-declared Lebanon "security zone."

Last week two Palestinians stabbed and critically wounded their Israeli taxi driver.

"We are aware that when talks extend over a long period of time there could be elements who lose their patience and opt for violence," the army spokesman said. The next phase of Israeli-Palestinian talks is expected to start within two weeks though the venue has not been fixed.

Israel's Shin Bet secret police chief has defended his investigators against allegations they used torture to extract confessions from Palestinians detained during the uprising.

Israel's Tm news service said the chief, whose identity is a state secret, was responding Sunday to allegations brought to Israel's high court of justice by the Public Committee Against Torture in Israel.

## Palestinians working on self-rule

(Continued from page 1)

terms of substance and strategy are steps that would ensure the smooth running of this process creating the conditions that would lead to transitional arrangements that would support the creation of independent Palestinian institutions and a Palestinian infrastructure," Dr. Ashrawi said.

She said the venue for the next round of bilateral talks with Israel, the second stage of the peace process, had still not been agreed but she confirmed that they would take place in the third week of November.

The talks will match Israel with three separate Arab teams — Syria, Lebanon and a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation. Dr. Ashrawi said lack of progress on one Arab track would not

delay any agreement on interim self-rule reached between Palestinians and Israelis.

Some Palestinians have voiced concern that Syria, which wants the Golan Heights back from Israel, might either cut a separate deal with the Jewish state or block peace efforts if it failed to achieve this.

Dr. Ashrawi said the Arab countries had to ensure "that we do not come up with unilateral agreements that would undermine each other's work."

The delegations would coordinate strategies, she said. "All the Arab countries involved understand the need for a transitional stage and they all support our need for conditions... to end the Israeli occupation," Dr. Ashrawi said.

## Palestinian refugees deplore lack of 'right of return'

By Mariam M. Shahin  
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Politics is a way of life for the over 960,000 registered Palestinian refugees living in Jordan today. Never in their 43 years of existence as refugees has more anxiety been expressed about their future than now.

The only political parties that call for the "liberation" of the villages, towns and cities that they were forced to flee in the 1947-48 conflict, are the so-called "radical" parties. Be they Islamist, nationalist, or socialist in political nuance, these parties carry very little weight with the Arab governments and the Palestinian leadership at the moment.

Although the 2.5 million Palestinian refugees are the

"core" of the Arab-Israeli conflict, their plight was almost ignored at last week's peace conference in Madrid. While they represent 50 per cent of the Palestinians in the diaspora, the political reality of the new world order did not allow for their issue to be given its due at the opening of the talks.

"The right of return will never be ignored or forfeited," said Palestinian delegate to the Madrid conference Ghassan Al Kharib. "But let us take one issue at a time. If there is to be peace between Palestinians and Israelis, then all these issues will have to be discussed, but that takes time and patience."

Some observers have already suggested that an eventual "ideal" outcome of a

peace conference, Israeli settlers in the occupied territories will be allowed to stay where they are in return for the application of U.N. resolutions giving 1947-48 refugees the right of return.

But Palestinians who have been residing in refugee camps in Jordan for more than 40 years are not that optimistic.

"Even the PLO has accepted this peace with Israel without asking that we return as the No. 1 request," said Kifah, a 22-year-old engineer from the Baqa'a refugee camp north west of Amman.

"We were there before the Russians, before the Poles, before the Ethiopians, and yet no word of the right of return," reiterates Siham Al Jaoumi, 43, a resident of Al Hussein refugee camp in the centre of

Amman.

The issue most frequently raised by the '47-48 refugees is that the right of return has been guaranteed to them by international law and that Israel's law of return only allows for "Jews to return."

"And the U.S. government says Zionism is not racism," mocks 24-year-old Saeda, another resident of Al Hussein camp. The non-application of international law is not new for these Palestinian refugees; what is new is that the political stand of the Arab countries, and indeed the position of the Palestinian leadership, appears to be changing.

"The Arabs are always giving in and giving up; first it was our land and next I fear it will be our rights," says Kifah. While Kifah and most camp

residents realise that a military struggle against Israel may be futile and that a negotiated peace may be the best way to proceed for the Palestinians, they fear that except for the "radical" groups, that have been sidelined by the Arab regimes, no one speaks on their behalf.

"The other day some U.N. persons spoke of 'compensation'. What do I want with compensation? They took my house, my land, my country. How do they think anyone can compensate for that," asked Siham, a mother of ten.

"The U.S. says it wants peace and at the same time has plans to give another \$10 billion in aid to Israel. To do what? To settle the Soviets on my land," Siham says, showing that she knows what is going

on on the Israeli-American front. "So why don't they want to resettle me on my land. Once they do that, maybe they can say that Israel is not a racist state."

While not all Palestinian refugees of 1947-48 have political leanings that would support a "radical" political group, the centrist parties seem to be losing their popularity.

"I used to go to a lot of political meetings, but no more. They all say the same thing, they have no solutions to my problems," says Saeda. "Whatever happens, there is no military solution and the political solution has left us out in the cold. The Palestinian delegation did all it could with what it had to work with, but sooner or later our plight must be addressed."

## NATO starts to think the unthinkable in post-cold war era

By Nicholas Doughty  
Reuters

ROME — NATO, trying to map out a new role now that it has lost its old enemies, is taking cautious steps towards changes that could transform the Western alliance — or bring about its collapse.

Its Rome summit has brought suggestions that it should take on new East European members and play a wider military role — ideas that were all but taboo until recently and are still highly controversial.

The question is whether NATO, the world's only functioning military alliance now that the Warsaw Pact has been hurled, can get agreement among all members that it should take on new responsibilities in building European and global security.

Such fundamental change will take a long time to find acceptance in a cautious, slow-moving organisation.

"It will be impossible for us to force the pace on these issues," a NATO diplomat said. "We work only through consensus. If that breaks, it could be the end of NATO."

Some members, notably the United States and Britain, say NATO will be thrown on the scrapheap of history if it does not take on new responsibilities.

Others, led by France, are cautious about new roles. They do not want NATO to become a sort of world police force or to dilute the alliance's power by extending membership.

"There is no road map for the new world, no way to know what the next year, let alone the next century, will bring," U.S. President George Bush told Thursday's opening summit session.

"But our ability to cope with the future — indeed to shape it — will be immeasurably greater if we walk out of here tomorrow with an alliance renewed."

The United States and Britain failed to convince other NATO members that alliance assets, such as bases and supplies, should be used to support U.N.-sponsored humanitarian operations or missions to uphold the international rule of law.

The alliance has a vast military machine at its disposal, but can only use it to defend the territory of its 16 member nations, since

they do not agree whether this should be allowed.

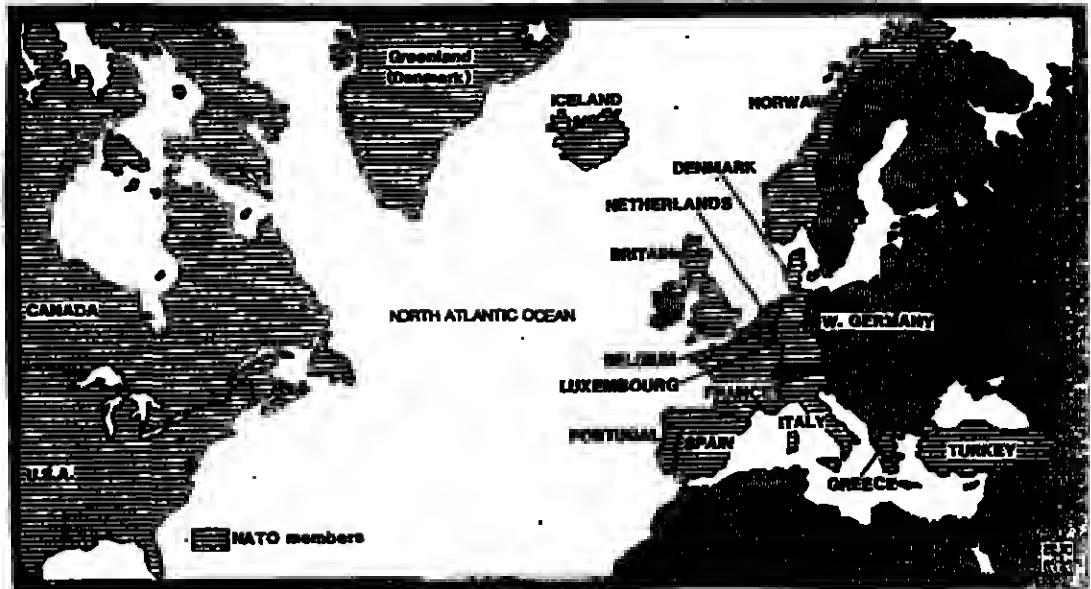
NATO was therefore not directly involved in the Gulf war, a U.N.-sponsored operation, and there was sharp criticism in the United States of European allies perceived as not doing enough to support the military effort.

Another example of a crisis in which they can play no real part is close to hand — the civil war in Yugoslavia.

NATO has argued for years over whether it should engage in so-called "out of area" operations, but the end of the cold war and an increasing signs of instability from the Soviet Union to the Balkans have given the debate new impetus.

A new strategy approved by the leaders on Thursday identifies the new risks to Western security as lying beyond the alliance's borders but makes clear NATO can only tackle a crisis with military force if it spills over into its area.

The summit has agreed to offer its former enemies, including the Soviet Union, formal ties for the first time through a "cooperation



council" that will hold joint meetings of foreign ministers once a year.

But U.S. and some NATO officials are suggesting that this is simply the first step towards a long-term goal of membership for new democracies like Czechoslovakia and Hungary.

Until now, NATO has resisted

pressure from those countries to offer them security guarantees that might protect them from growing ethnic and nationalist unrest at home and in their vast Soviet neighbour.

Mr. Bush did not clearly endorse the idea of membership at the summit — but he came very close.

"We cannot welcome these nations to our world of values and yet hold them at arms length from our affairs," he said.

"For 40 years we said, even though your voices are silenced by tyranny, we hear you. Now that these voices are free, can we turn a deaf ear?"

## Cairo meeting

(Continued from page 1)

ign Minister Amr Musa told Reuters his country had presented its working papers, including the one on security. He refused to disclose its contents.

"This is a way of postponing the discussions," one delegate commented.

In August, after Egypt had brought home most of its troops that helped drive Iraq out of Kuwait, Cairo released a version of the declaration it said had been approved by the foreign ministers in July 19 meeting in Kuwait.

It said nothing of petrodollar payments to Egypt and Syria or of their troops in the Gulf area being the backbone of an Arab security force, both features of the Damascus declaration revealed shortly after it was signed. On Monday, Mr. Musa said the meeting would consider "starting the implementation of the Damascus declaration."

Another controversial point that eventually must be agreed is whether non-Arab Iran should participate in future security arrangements. Some Gulf countries support an Iranian role, but Egypt and others are strongly opposed.

By Andrew Hill  
Reuters

BAGHDAD — Iraq, hoping to end a U.N. trade embargo, is cooperating closely with U.N. inspectors scrapping its most lethal weapons only six weeks after a car park showdown which raised fears of a new armed conflict with Washington.

"We had good cooperation. We needed Iraq's cooperation and we got it," said Marius Van Zelm, head of a U.N. team which arrived just after the car park incident to catalogue Baghdad's arsenal of chemical weapons. The team left this weekend.

A 44-member team of U.N. nuclear inspectors camped four nights in a Baghdad car park in September until the Iraqi authorities let them leave with documents which the inspectors said

proved Iraq was developing nuclear weapons.

U.N. officials and Iraqi spokesmen say Baghdad has turned the page on the incident in the hope that compliance with the search-and-destroy teams will hasten the end of U.N. trade shackles on its economy and allow it to sell crude again.

Iraqi government strategy appears to be to comply with resolutions of the Gulf war ceasefire on scrapping its weapons and at the same time to mobilise world opinion on the suffering the embargo is causing.

It complains at the United Nations and any international meeting it attends that the sanctions are killing thousands of old and young because of shortages of drugs and food.

Baghdad apparently hopes this will head off pressure to make it

accept U.N. Resolution 706, which would allow it to sell limited quantities of oil to buy food and drugs but which would give the United Nations control of the revenue from such sales.

"I don't see them accepting 706. It would give the U.N. almost total control of their resources, and Baghdad can't accept that," said one diplomat.

"Iraq will resist all it can." Oil Minister Usama Al Hiti told Reuters last week. "I believe we are implementing all U.N. resolutions such implementation, with good faith and cooperation with U.N. inspectors, shows the willingness of the Iraqi government to do its utmost."

"I feel strongly that the U.N. should now lift the embargo, as they have promised to do before. We know we have differences with some members of the Secur-

ity Council, but the embargo is a U.N. embargo, not a British or American one," he said.

Iraq says the United States, Britain and France are seeking to destroy Iraq by making it a virtual U.N. protectorate but that the U.N. membership as a whole would drop the sanctions if they knew what suffering they caused.

The watershed in Iraq's ties with the inspection teams appears to have been the car park crisis, during which the United States was said to be studying targets for air strikes.

Iraq admitted last month for the first time that it was carrying out research into the development of an atomic bomb, something it had until then angrily denied. But it still denies manufacturing the bombs themselves. Another flashpoint was Iraq's

refusal to allow the U.N. teams to use helicopters for trips around the country. Iraq's Air Force has been grounded since the sanctions were imposed in August last year.

That is history. U.N. teams now routinely use the helicopters, flown by German crews based in Turkey, although Baghdad insists flight paths be cleared with its security first.

Van Zelm's team travelled by bus for the first half of its mission to Muthana, 130 kilometres northwest of Baghdad, because Iraqi security for undisclosed reasons would not allow it to fly directly there in the helicopters.

But it received clearance to use the aircraft for the second half of its mission and a new U.N. nuclear inspection team, which arrived in Baghdad on Sunday, is expected to do the same.

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## Financial Markets

in co-operation with Cairo Amman Bank

U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	New York Close Date 8/11/1991	Tokyo Close Date 11/11/1991
Sterling Pound	1.7647	1.7657
Deutsche Mark	1.6465	1.6455
Swiss Franc	1.4535	1.4575
French Franc	5.6295	5.6255
Japanese Yen	130.38	130.01
European Currency Unit	1.2425	1.2409

USD Per STG

European Opening @ 9:00 a.m. GMT

Eurocurrency Interest Rates

Currency	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	4.51	4.93	4.87	5.06
Sterling Pound	10.25	10.06	10.00	10.12
Deutsche Mark	8.93	9.18	9.16	9.25
Swiss Franc	7.50	7.87	7.81	7.81
French Franc	9.18	9.06	9.06	9.06
Japanese Yen	6.25	6.16	5.90	5.56
European Currency Unit	9.18	9.71	9.75	9.78

Interest rate bid rates for amounts exceeding U.S. Dollars 1,000,000 or equivalent.

Precious Metals	U.S. Dollar	JD/Gm	U.S. Dollar	JD/Gm
Gold	345.65	6.80	Silver	4.03

21 Karat

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.6840	0.6860
Sterling Pound	1.2051	1.2111
Deutsche Mark	0.4147	0.4168
Swiss Franc	0.4694	0.4717
French Franc	0.1214	0.1220
Japanese Yen	0.5257	0.5263
Dutch Guilder	0.3651	0.3699
Swedish Krona	0.1136	0.1142
Italian Lira	0.0552	0.0555
Belgian Franc	0.02012	0.02022

Per 100

Currency	Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.7850	1.7950
Lebanese Lira	0.07764	0.0780
Saudi Riyal	0.1821	0.1831
Kuwaiti Dinar	—	—
Qatari Riyal	0.1855	0.1865
Egyptian Pound	0.2000	0.2100
Omani Riyal	1.7510	1.7610
UAE Dirham	0.1655	0.1665
Greek Drachma	0.3600	0.3770
Cypriot Pound	1.4706	1.4880

Per 100

CAB Indices for Amman Financial Market

Index	9/11/1991 Close	10/11/1991 Close
All-Share	124.31	124.30
Banking Sector	104.77	104.84
Insurance Sector	125.59	125.61
Industry Sector	152.97	153.69
Services Sector	133.12	133.96

December 31, 1990 = 100

## LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Monday.

One Sterling	1.7620/30	U.S. dollars
One U.S. dollar	1.1285/90	Canadian dollar
	1.6470/80	Deutsche marks
	1.8570/80	Dutch guilders
	1.4580/85	Swiss francs
	33.95/99	Belgian francs
	5.6275/6325	French francs
	1238/1239	Italian lire
	130.25/35	Japanese yen
	6.0160/0210	Swedish crowns
	6.4600/50	Norwegian crowns
	6.3890/3940	Danish crowns
One ounce of gold	354.80/355.30	U.S. dollars

## Mexico extends controversial wage, price control programme

MEXICO CITY (R) — The government slowed the devaluation of the peso, raised Mexico's minimum wage by 12 per cent and announced stiff energy price hikes Sunday as it extended a controversial wage and price control programme into a fifth year.

The measures were announced as part of a 14-month extension of the stability and economic growth pact (PECE), an anti-inflation programme in force since December 1987 when Mexico was plagued by triple-digit inflation.

The decision to cut the daily "crawling peg" devaluation of the peso against the U.S. dollar to 20 centavos or 0.006 cents a day from the current 40-centavo rate underscored growing confidence in the economy and public sector finances. Mexico's foreign reserves have doubled to around \$14 billion since 1989.

The government's decision to eliminate the two-tiered exchange rate system that allowed it to set a special "controlled rate" for exports was seen as another sign of confidence, in line with free-market reforms. The system had been in place since the Latin debt crisis erupted here in 1982.

The new exchange rate policy could help bring down high

domestic interest rates. But a recent survey by the independent private sector Centre for Economic Studies showed that over 54 per cent of Mexican businesses opposed reducing the peso's slide against the dollar, since it could adversely affect non-oil exports and add to a widening trade deficit.

Analysts said the new energy prices announced Sunday would help shore up public sector finances by slashing unnecessary subsidies and rising petrol import costs. The price hikes are sure to fuel year end inflation, however.

The increases include a 55 per cent hike in the price of leaded petrol and 25 per cent for unleaded. The government also announced a 15.3 per cent rise in the cost of electricity for residential consumers and said industrial rates, which some foreign businesses say are already unreasonably high, would increase by an average of 14.5 per cent.

The government said the terms under which the PECE was extended were agreed with union and industry leaders, but the 12 per cent minimum wage increase is sure to draw worker protests. Real wages in Mexico have shrunk by around 60 per cent

since 1982 and Sunday's 12 per cent wage hike does little to help wage earners cut their losses. The increase fails to match inflation of 13.3 per cent for the first 10 months of 1991 announced just last week by the Banco de Mexico.

Inflation last year was 30 per cent and the minimum wage rose just 18 per cent. With Sunday's increase of about 45 cents — less than the cost of a litre of milk — minimum wage earners will now take home around \$4.25 a day. For Mexico's impoverished majority the only good news in Sunday's package of economic measures was that the government had decided to cut the domestic value added tax to 10 per cent from a current high of 20 per cent.

In a brief speech announcing the extension of the PECE, President Carlos Salinas said it would "give solidity and firmness to our economy" while protecting the interests of workers, peasants and businessmen alike.

As a Mexican banker noted, however, "the poor and minimum wage earners are paying more than anyone else for Mexico's economic recovery."

## Cubans face sharp salary cuts

HAVANA (R) — Cuba has ordered companies to try to scale back their working hours in a fresh economic belt-tightening measure that could slash many workers' salaries by nearly a third.

The policy, announced by the Cuban news agency Prensa Latina, aims to reduce operating hours at factories and companies hurt by Cuba's economic crisis in order to save on the subsidised meals the communist state offers its workers.

Workers are guaranteed their jobs and at least 70 per cent of their base salary even if they work less than the customary eight-hour workday, the news agency said.

Workers earning 100 pesos a month (about \$100 at official exchange rates) will receive their full salary "even in the event of closures of businesses and factories for lack of raw materials," it said.

The new policy underscores the economic difficulties besetting Cuba, which is receiving erratic assistance from its main supplier, the Soviet Union.

Prensa Latina said the new policy was two-pronged: "One part is to concentrate efforts and resources on those areas of maximum priority. The other is to restrict — in an organised and equitable manner — the population's consumption, as well as economic activity in certain spheres."

Cuba blames part of its economic troubles on a 30-year-old U.S. trade and economic embargo. It has mounted a campaign at the United Nations, pressing for a resolution calling for a lifting of

the embargo. But the heaviest blow has been the political upheaval in the former Soviet Bloc, which had provided Cuba with four-fifths of its external commerce. Cuba is now actively seeking to strengthen its commercial links with western Europe and its neighbours in Latin America.

Widespread food shortages, official rationing of virtually everything you can buy and a flourishing but inflationary black market are testing the patience and squeezing the pockets of ordinary Cubans.

Unlike many Third World countries such as neighbouring Haiti, there is no real hunger or rock-bottom poverty visible on the communist-ruled Caribbean island.

And the nation's more than 10 million people still have access to a free, high-standard health and education system that is the envy of most developing nations.

But a combination of a continuing U.S. trade embargo, dwindling supplies from the Soviet Union and domestic industries which do not satisfy demand make filling the family food basket a time-consuming and frustrating chore for most Cuban families.

"Getting by," conveyed by the Cuban expression "resolver," is the name of the game across the island.

A sharp fall-off in imports from traditional ally the Soviet Union has forced the communist government to extend the existing rationing system to include practically every item one can buy, from cigarettes, eggs and cooking gas to shoes.

Under austerity measures, the state-run stores known as "bodegas" are currently the only legal outlet for basic provisions to the population.

But as a popular joke illustrates, monthly cheap, subsidised supplies of rice, meat, beans, sugar and other bodega items through the "libreta" (ration book) simply do not adequately cover a family's needs for four weeks.

The joke goes: "What do you call the bodega supplies? The Americans. Why? Because they keep threatening to come but never do."

Invoking the official perception of the constant threat of a U.S. invasion, the joke is an example of the mordant humour with which the average Cuban confronts daily hardships.

Bodega supplies which have not arrived for up to two months are soap, detergent and cooking oil or fat, currently the most coveted items on the island. Some families wash clothes and dishes with toothpaste mixed with water.

The authorities say the rationing system is the only way to ensure a fair distribution of scarce resources.

But ironically, the extended rationing system and gradual shut-down of state markets selling non-rationed items has fuelled a flourishing black market that has all the characteristics of a capitalist-style free market.

"There is only one real market, the black one," one housewife said. "The bodega is where the shortages are, people try to get the rest on the street."

The black market can provide everything from car parts to avocados but at spiralling prices which make ordinary Cubans, used to cheap, subsidised official prices, gasp with outrage.

A bar of soap, worth 15 cents at the bodega, goes for eight pesos "on the street". A whole chicken, 70 cents a pound officially, sells for 25 pesos or more on the black market, a sixth of an average worker's monthly wage of 150 pesos. Black market shoes or trousers can sell for 200 pesos or more.

The official exchange rate is 1.3 pesos per dollar but you can get more than 15 pesos for a dollar "on the street" from hustlers.

Where do the street supplies come from? "It's all...," says one Cuban, swiping with his hand to indicate stealing.

## Rabat to spend more on defence, education and health next year

RABAT (R) — Morocco plans big increases in spending on defence, education, health and housing next year, budget estimates presented to parliament show.

Defence spending is set to increase by 13.7 per cent from 8.8 billion dirhams (\$1 billion) this year to 10 billion dirhams (\$1.1 billion) next year, according to a copy of the estimates obtained by Reuters.

The figures include the payroll and running expenses for the 204,000-strong royal armed forces and new capital investments of 1.4 billion dirhams (\$162 million).

Diplomatic sources say Morocco has contracted to buy two large Sikorsky helicopters for \$28 million and is considering buying 25 used F-16 fighters from the United States.

Morocco has spent heavily on

defence in the last 15 years since Polisario guerrillas began fighting for the independence of the former Spanish colony of Western Sahara.

The budget draft, presented by Finance Minister Mohammed Berrada, shows a rise of nearly 21 per cent in spending on education, where there have been protests this year against poor facilities, to 1.6 billion dirhams (\$186 million).

The health services, whose staff staged a nation-wide strike recently in protest against lack of funding and facilities, will get 552 million dirhams (\$64 million), a rise of more than 25 per cent, after a 30 per cent rise in 1991.

Spending on new housing will rise by 183 per cent to 283 million dirhams (\$33 million) as part of a nine billion dirhams (\$1 billion) medium-term building programme.

The draft puts the cost of foreign debt servicing next year at 15.5 billion dirhams (\$1.8 billion), down by nearly 13 per cent on this year.

Morocco's foreign debt was estimated by the World Bank at \$22 billion in 1988 but the burden has been lightened by rescheduling. The budget authorises the government to borrow up to 15.7 billion dirhams (\$1.82 billion) abroad next year.

Total budget spending in 1992 is 86.4 billion dirhams (\$10 billion), an increase of 5.5 per cent, leaving a deficit of 1.45 billion dirhams (\$168 million).

Revenue from direct taxes is expected to rise by 23.8 per cent, customs duties by 24.3 per cent, and indirect taxes by 15.3 per cent, and the deficit will be cut from 1.6 billion dirhams (\$186 million) in 1991.

## Jordan imports increase

## Bad times boiling for tea industry in Sri Lanka

COLOMBO (Agencies) — Falling tea prices and poor exports are threatening to edge Sri Lanka out of its position as the world's largest tea exporter, a leading tea broker said Monday.

Tea prices fell during the last few months after the Soviet Union and Middle Eastern countries stayed away from the local tea auctions, said Rohan Iddawela, an executive at Forbes and Walker Ltd., a major tea brokerage firm.

Tea exports during the first three quarters this year fetched 13.3 billion rupees (\$300 million), which is 1.5 billion rupees (\$30 million) less than for the same period in 1990, he said in a telephone interview.

Sri Lanka exported 161.2 million kilograms of tea during that period last year, but is 57 million kilograms short of that figure this year.

Egypt, which was Sri Lanka's largest tea buyer in 1990, was edged out by Jordan, which hiked its purchase sixfold to 23.5 million kilograms and was followed by Iran, which bought nearly the same amount, Mr. Iddawela said.

Iraq was Sri Lanka's second-largest tea buyer before the Gulf war, but pulled out of the auctions last month after it was left with tea it had stocked fearing a long war.

"Iraq cannot afford to buy tea from us at the same level as prior to the war," said a tea board official who spoke on condition of anonymity. "Iraq's absence is one of the main reasons for the depressed prices."

The Soviet Union, another major buyer of Sri Lanka tea, switched to Indonesia after being offered easy payment terms, Mr. Iddawela said.

"If these two buyers come back to the auctions, that would certainly give prices a boost," the tea board official said.

Last month, the tea market was on the verge of collapse with the price of a kilogram of tea down to rupees 50.15 (\$1.22) from 63.74 rupees (\$1.35) in September.

In 1990 Sri Lanka exported 215.6 million kilograms of tea to beat India and become the world's exporter tea seller. India exported 199 million kilograms

of tea last year.

Sri Lanka's total earnings from tea exports stood at more than \$520 million last year.

Tea has long been the country's largest foreign exchange earner, bringing in about \$500 million a year.

Meanwhile, Sri Lankan officials will give high priority to defence in the 1992 budget to be presented in parliament this week, but only grudgingly, official sources said Monday.

"We would have hoped for a cut in defence spending because it is eating into the country's meagre resources. But we have no choice since the army has to fight a war," a senior treasury official said.

Government expenditure is projected at 156.6 billion rupees (\$3.7 billion) up from 139 billion rupees (\$3.3 billion) in 1991. Revenue is set at 87 billion rupees (\$2 billion), up from 72 billion rupees (\$1.7 billion), leaving an estimated deficit of 69.6 billion rupees (\$1.6 billion), up from the 1991 estimate of 67 billion rupees (\$1.5 billion).

Next year, as in previous years, at least 10 per cent of the budget will go to defence spending, official sources said.

Defence spending for 1992 would be 15.3 billion rupees (\$364 million) against a 1991 budget estimate of 11.7 billion rupees (\$278 million).

The treasury official, who declined to be named, said that defence spending this year had overtaken the budget estimate because of increased fighting with Tamils in troubled areas.

"We had to give another four billion rupees (\$95 million) for defence this year. Maybe the same request for more funds will come from the army next year if there is no early end to the war," he said.

"It is a tragedy that a lot of local resources are channelled for defence. Otherwise all these funds could have been used for development," the official said.

The treasury official said that defence, unlike other budget items, does not rely on foreign funds.

## Red ink blotches Egyptair

CAIRO (R) — Higher fuel and insurance costs during the Gulf crisis meant Egypt's national carrier Egyptair made a small loss in the year to June, its financial director said Monday.

"We went into the red but not very much," Mahmoud Al Seirafi told Reuters.

He declined to give precise figures but said press reports putting operating losses at 800 million Egyptian pounds (\$240 million) were exaggerated.

In the year to June 1990, the firm made profits of about 80 million pounds (\$24 million) on turnover of 1.5 billion pounds (\$500 million), he said.

Egyptair lost two major routes to Baghdad and Kuwait after Iraq invaded the emirate in August last year. Up to a million Egyptians worked in Iraq before the Gulf crisis and nearly 200,000 in Kuwait.

## Report says BCCI stole over \$2 b from UAE president

LONDON (AP) — The Bank of Credit and Commerce International (BCCI) diverted more than \$2 billion from the personal account of the ruler of Abu Dhabi, according to sources quoted by the Financial Times Monday.

The newspaper said the ruler, Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahayan, was a close friend of bank president Agha Hasan Abedi and is believed to have entrusted him with his share of Abu Dhabi's oil revenues in the early 1980s.

The Financial Times quoted one unidentified investigator of the bank as saying the final figure might be as high as \$2.5 billion.

The Financial Times said the emirate's oil revenues were placed in the National Bank of Abu Dhabi and from there, the ruler's share was transferred into accounts at ICIC, an offshoot of the BCCI group in the Cayman Islands.

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## EC monitors to quit Dubrovnik

ZAGREB (Agencies) — The European Community will pull its monitors out of the Adriatic port of Dubrovnik as soon as possible because it is too dangerous to stay there, an EC spokesman said Monday.

"We are concerned about their safety. We plan to withdraw them at the first possible opportunity," EC mission spokesman Ed Koestel told reporters in the Croatian capital Zagreb.

"We are talking to the Yugoslav army about arranging a partial ceasefire so that we can get them out. We do not know when we will be able to do this," Mr. Koestel said.

The Hotel Argentina where the six EC monitors are staying was hit directly Sunday when the Serb-led armed forces bombarded Dubrovnik with heavy artillery from land and sea.

Fighting continued Monday when navy gunboats attacked from the sea and artillery fire rained down from nearby hills.

The Yugoslav army has bombarded Dubrovnik daily since Croatia forces trapped inside with about 50,000 residents ignored an ultimatum to surrender their weapons last Thursday.

"Naval anti-aircraft guns have fired directly into the city and the Lapid peninsula next to it," Mr.

Koestel said. "The hill behind the Hotel Argentina has been taken over by the army."

He said the hotel itself had not come under direct attack on Monday although it was hit Sunday and a British journalist was shot in the leg.

"Our teams have come out of their shelters but they are trapped inside the hotel. It is too dangerous to move," he said.

"The monitors saw snipers fire at Red Cross vehicles in the town (from areas held by the army). The fact that they fired at ambulances is unbelievable, it is as if there was no such thing as the Geneva Conventions."

Dubrovnik has been under army siege for 42 days and a naval blockade was reimposed at the weekend. Supplies of food and water are running low.

More than 200 EC monitors are in Croatia but the areas they are prepared to visit are shrinking as fighting worsens.

Only one monitor has so far been wounded but several teams have had narrow escapes. An EC driver was hurt last week in an apparent attack by army jets on a hotel housing monitors in eastern Croatia.

The Serb-led Yugoslav military renewed its attack Monday on Dubrovnik and also appeared

poised to take the besieged eastern Croatian city of Vukovar.

Dubrovnik, under siege since Oct. 1, came under fierce ground and sea attack just before 7:00 a.m. (0600 GMT), Croatian radio and the European Community reported.

As they have throughout the 4½ month war, Croatian radio and Radio Belgrade gave widely varying casualty figures from heavy battles around the city Sunday.

Croatian radio said five people were killed and many wounded, while Radio Belgrade said 30 Croats were killed. The reports could not be immediately verified.

Croatian radio said about 17 hotels were hit, including those housing thousands of refugees from surrounding areas which have already fallen to the Serb-dominated army and been reduced from a beautiful riverside to shelled and torched wasteland.

Meanwhile, federal troops began leaving the northern port of Rijeka under an agreement brokered by EC monitors Saturday. The first tanks were being loaded on to boats, radio said. The Rijeka Corps must depart the port by Dec. 10.

Local officials reached by tele-

phone in Vukovar refused to give any information and the Croatian Defence Ministry in Zagreb said it also had no news from that front.

Vukovar, located on the Croatian side of the Danube River boundary with Serbia, has so far blocked army efforts to seize absolute control over a large piece of eastern Croatia.

Its resistance has become a rallying symbol for the breakaway republic in its undeclared war with Serb forces.

Observers said the army is determined to overcome the city's stubborn resistance to preserve its own prestige. Federal forces, criticised by Serbian leaders for failing to seize Vukovar, appeared poised to take the ravaged town.

Federal troops battled Croatian defenders street by street for Vukovar Sunday. Belgrade media said federal troops captured a strategic hill only 100 metres away from the town centre.

Reports from Serbia and Croatia said the town's defences were near collapse under attack from the army's heavy weapons. At least 25 people were reported seriously wounded in what was described as a tank and infantry assault.



Norodom Sihanouk

## Sihanouk to be escorted back to Cambodia

PHNOM PENH (R) — Phnom Penh Prime Minister Hun Sen left for Peking Monday to escort home to Cambodia former monarch and guerrilla chief Prince Norodom Sihanouk from 13 years in exile.

The 40-year-old premier, who lost an eye while fighting as a youthful Khmer Rouge commander, smiled broadly as he moved down a long line of officials who came to see him off on his historic mission.

He chatted amiably with many of his older colleagues, grised veterans of 20 years of war and political turmoil in this tiny country between Vietnam and Thailand.

Twenty minutes after he flew off in a Russian-made Kamov helicopter, envoys from the United States and Britain arrived at Phnom Penh's airport to mark the Oct. 23 peace treaty signed by Cambodia's four warring factions.

"We believe the comprehensive settlement agreement offers the most realistic way to bring peace to Cambodia, give the Cambodian people the chance to choose their own government and build safeguards against the violence of the past," said Charles Twining, head of the U.S. mission in Cambodia.

British special representative David Burns expressed confidence that the Paris treaty, backed up by U.N. peacekeeping forces, could mean an end to war in Cambodia.

Both men will present their diplomatic credentials to Sihanouk after he returns to Phnom Penh on Nov. 14 as head of the Supreme National Council (SNC), a reconciliation body made up of the Vietnam-installed Phnom Penh government, the Khmer Rouge and two smaller guerrilla factions.

Twining said the American mission would be upgraded to an embassy after U.N.-supervised elections select a national government.

The Western envoys arrived a day after the first U.N. peacekeeping forces marched off to spearhead a U.N. operation expected to last two years, cost \$2 billion and involve 12,000 people.

The Australian soldiers will build a communications network between the factions, the SNC and the United Nations.

## Baker urges Japan to lead, not follow, on world affairs

TOKYO (R) — U.S. Secretary of State James Baker exhorted Japan Monday to lead, rather than follow, in opening up world markets and expanding its global diplomatic role.

He said Japan should make proposals to help conclude international trade talks and expand its involvement in global affairs from an emphasis on "checkbook diplomacy" to a wider role, including promotion of democracy and human rights.

"Japan should step forward as a leader in confronting global issues rather than relying on 'gaitsui' — foreign pressures — to justify decisions on economics or security affairs that are in its own interests," he said in a speech prepared for Japanese political and business leaders.

Mr. Baker intends to use his first visit to Tokyo since 1989 to cement the post-cold war U.S.-Japan alliance, as he and President George Bush joined with NATO leaders last week to chart

a future course for the Atlantic alliance now that the military threat from the Soviet Union has receded.

He is also expected to try to smooth the feelings of his hosts, who were miffed when Mr. Bush postponed a late November trip to Japan because of complaints he was ignoring domestic affairs.

Critics charge the administration with neglecting Asia, but Mr. Baker told the Japanese Institute for International Affairs: "I want to leave no doubt that the United States is fully committed to working with Japan and others in the region to shape a new era in world affairs and a new order in Asia."

"America's relationship with Japan is our most important bilateral relationship in the world, bar none," he said.

"Reiterating many of the ideas contained in an article he wrote for the latest issue of Foreign Affairs magazine, he said he would explore on his nine-day

Asian trip the possibility of a regional initiative to ease tensions on the Korean peninsula.

Modelled after the multilateral effort that settled the Cambodian civil war, this would involve the United States, the Soviet Union, China, Japan, North Korea and South Korea.

In a change from the past, when the United States tried to keep the Soviet Union from playing a role in Asia, Mr. Baker argued that "we should engage the Soviet Union and Russia in Asia."

He delivered his speech after talks with new Foreign Minister Michio Watanabe and before meeting the country's new Prime Minister, Kiichi Miyazawa.

A senior U.S. official who briefed reporters on condition of anonymity said the United States in recent days had made proposals to reduce trade frictions with Japan. He gave no details but said Tokyo had agreed to consider them.

## 52 die in S. African mine war

JOHANNESBURG (R) — At least 52 miners were killed at a South African gold mine over the weekend in the worst outbreak of fighting between black factions this year, police and management said Monday.

Fighting between rival factions broke out Friday and again Sunday at the President Steyn Mine near the Orange Free State town of Welkom, south of Johannesburg.

About 70 miners have now been reported killed since fighting erupted at the complex a week ago on the eve of a national strike called by anti-apartheid movements.

At least 180 workers have been wounded in battles between men wielding axes, spears and clubs.

Anglo American Corporation of South Africa sealed off its mine to reporters and the situation behind its steel gates and fences was not clear.

Police said initially 52 were killed Sunday, but later revised the death toll to 54 for the entire weekend. Anglo said 52 had died since Friday.

"This is the worst clash this year... there could be more bodies out there and there are many badly injured people in hospital," said police spokesman Burger Van Rooyen.

More than 3,000 blacks have died in factional fighting over the country in the past 15 months.

President F.W. de Klerk last week threatened "further steps... entailing serious implications" if political violence did not cease. He did not elaborate but political analysts speculated Monday that white government could reimpose emergency rule in some areas.

## Miyazawa wins support to send troops abroad

TOKYO (R) — Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa won decisive parliamentary support Monday for his plan to send Japanese troops on peacekeeping missions overseas for the first time since World War II.

Koshiro Ishida, head of the Buddhist-backed Komeito Party, promised backing for the bills which would authorise a peacekeeping role for about 2,000 of the 160,000-strong army.

Komeito's support assured the new premier of a majority vote in both houses of parliament. Foreign Ministry officials said they expected the bills to be passed by the end of the year.

The officials said Japan would be staking its diplomatic reputation on the bills. Tokyo wants to send troops to Cambodia as soon as possible to join a huge United Nations peacekeeping operation

moving in after the signing of a peace pact last month.

The first Australian forces arrived in Cambodia at the weekend.

Mr. Miyazawa denied charges by opposition Socialist Party Chairman Makoto Tanabe that the bills violated the U.S.-drafted "peace" constitution. This bans the government from using the military to settle international disputes.

"The bills do not run counter to the constitution," Mr. Miyazawa told the opening session of the lower house of parliament.

"Rather, it goes along with the constitutional idea of international cooperation. I ask you to enact this bill as soon as possible."

In a newspaper survey published Sunday, more than half of those polled said they thought the bills were unconstitutional.

## Far-right gains shake Socialist power in Vienna

VIENNA (R) — Austria's right-wing Freedom Party (FPÖ), riding a wave of anti-immigration sentiment, scored its third election triumph in three months when it became the second strongest party in Socialist-dominated Vienna Sunday.

Final results of the Vienna municipal elections showed the FPÖ almost doubled its vote from the 1987 elections to win 23 seats in the 100-seat municipal assembly.

The ruling Socialist Party (SPÖ) lost its absolute majority in votes but managed to hang on to a two-seat majority in the assembly with 52 seats, a loss of 10.

The biggest loser was the Conservative People's Party (ÖVP), a junior partner in the national government with the SPÖ. It had been Vienna's second strongest party but won only 15 seats, down 12 on 1987.

The Green Party entered the Vienna Assembly for the first time, winning seven seats.

The FPÖ, supported in Vienna by its charismatic leader Jörg Haider, 41, campaigned for a reversal of liberal immigration policy under the slogan: "Austria for the Austrians."

The FPÖ earlier broke the ÖVP's absolute majorities in local elections in the federal states of Styria and Upper Austria after vigorous campaigns by Mr. Haider.

"We want no more immigrants to be accepted as long as we have Austrians unemployed and there is a housing shortage for Austrians," Mr. Haider said after the Vienna results were announced.

The polls showed that this is what many of the voters want.

He denied accusations of anti-foreigner demagoguery. "We are not unfriendly towards foreigners, but friendly towards Austrians," he said.

## Tsongas strategy seen paying dividends in New Hampshire

MANCHESTER, New Hampshire (AP) — Paul Tsongas' early entry into the Democratic presidential race appears to be paying off in New Hampshire, site of the nation's first primary.

The former Massachusetts senator still faces long odds of winning here. But his frequent visits, hard-working campaign and focus on rank-and-file Democrats rather than party leaders are making an impression on state residents that is showing up in the polls.

When Jerome Duval went to vote in Manchester's local elections last week, a Tsongas supporter was outside holding a sign.

"I've been bumping into Tsongas people all the time," said Mr. Duval. "They seem to be everywhere."

Mr. Tsongas and his pro-business economic message also got the attention of another Manchester Democrat, Joe Sullivan, with his mailings.

"I've read them and I'm impressed," Mr. Sullivan said. "He's not as liberal as I am, but what he says makes you think. It's going to come down to Kerry, Harkin or Tsongas for me."

Nebraska Sen. Bob Kerrey, Iowa Sen. Tom Harkin and Arkansas Gov. Bill Clinton generally are seen as the candidates to beat in New Hampshire.

But a survey of 300 New Hampshire Democrats and independents late last month put Mr. Tsongas and Kerry on top, with 24 per cent and 19 per cent,

respectively. The survey by Maguire Associates of Concord, Mass., had a margin of error of four to five percentage points.

Harkin came in third, with 12 per cent and the other candidates were in single digits. Twenty-six per cent were undecided.

Robert Craig, a University of New Hampshire political scientist, said the results reflect name recognition and not necessarily support come the primary on Feb. 18.

When Mr. Tsongas last April became the first major Democrat to enter the race, few rated him a serious contender. Some dismissed him as "the other Greek from Massachusetts," a reference to Michael Dukakis, the former governor and unsuccessful 1988 Democratic presidential nominee.

Mr. Duke, a state representative from Massachusetts, has used his proximity to New Hampshire to his advantage, making dozens of visits to the state.

He was creating a state campaign organisation that's new from the bottom up rather than relying on existing networks led by party regulars.

The campaign has sent volunteers, including many college students, into larger towns and cities to bang on the doors of Democrats who voted in 1988.

Sen. Harkin, Sen. Kerrey and Mr. Clinton all have more support than Mr. Tsongas among party leaders and veteran activists. But Mr. Helms said that

## Russia to seek political solution to Chechen dispute

MOSCOW (AP) — The Russian legislature Monday passed a resolution calling for a political solution to the crisis in the secessionist southern enclave of Chechnya-Ingushetia, renouncing an earlier presidential declaration of emergency rule.

Russian President Boris Yeltsin, who ordered the emergency rule, was not present when members of the Russian Supreme Soviet voted 126 to 21, adopting the resolution in principle.

Under legislative rules, lawmakers will begin discussing each of the resolution's four points separately, meaning the basic thrust of the document could be changed by the end of the day.

Chechnya-Ingushetia's week-old independence declaration is Mr. Yeltsin's first major separatist challenge, presenting him with the same dilemma Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev faces on a national level by republics wanting to leave the union.

Mr. Yeltsin responded toughly, declaring emergency rule in Chechnya-Ingushetia Friday and vowing to prevent the break-up of his republic.

Russian authorities also earlier issued an arrest warrant for the newly elected Chechen-Ingush president, retired Soviet army General Dzhokhar Dudayev. But Mr. Yeltsin's representative in Grozny, the region's capital, reportedly failed to carry it out.

Supporters of Gen. Dudayev Sunday forced the retreat of nearly 1,000 troops sent in a day earlier to enforce emergency rule, the first blow to Mr. Yeltsin's hardline response.

On Monday, the second day of a special debate on the crisis, Russian lawmakers searched for a peaceful solution.

"Despite the correctness of the decree of the president of the Russian Federation in declaring an emergency situation in the Chechen-Ingush Republic, we think it's necessary in the current situation to solve the crisis arising in the republic, not by using extraordinary measures but by political means," the resolution states.

Presiding over Monday's legislative session was Supreme Soviet Chairman Ruslan Khabibulov, an ethnic Chechen. During Sunday's heated debate, Mr. Khabibulov called Gen. Dudayev and his advisers "a group of bandits."

Gen. Dudayev has led the drive by nationalist Chechens to break free of Russian control. His mainly Muslim autonomous region of 1.3 million people, 1,400 kilometres southeast of Moscow, declared independence a week ago, expressing fears of Russian domination.

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## Mitterrand announces constitutional reforms

PARIS (R) — President Francois Mitterrand, whose 10-year grip on French politics recently seemed to be slipping, has played a constitutional trump card.

In a bold attempt to recapture the political initiative and split the right-wing opposition, the Socialist president announced Sunday he would call a referendum on a major reform of France's institutions next year.

Among the measures he proposed were cutting the presidential term of office from seven to five years, allowing parliament to initiate legislation, now a government prerogative, and giving aggrieved citizens direct access to the Constitutional Court.

First reactions indicated some dismay among opposition politicians, many of whom have proposed constitutional changes in the hope of unseating Mr. Mitterrand before his term ends.

Mr. Mitterrand, who turned 75 last month, also hinted he might quit before his second term of office expires in 1995 but made clear that he alone would take the decision and he would not be forced out by a right-wing parliamentary victory.

"I will not leave without having changed these institutions or at least having put before parliament and the French people the modifications I consider necessary," he said in a television interview. He promised a referendum for the second half of 1992.

Of his own tenure, he said: "I too sometimes think 14 years is long."

Mr. Mitterrand recalled that he had always opposed the constitution of France's Fifth Republic, tailor-made for the authoritarian

leadership of General Charles de Gaulle who took power in 1958 as a successor of weak post-war governments.

Mr. Mitterrand supported the introduction of an element of proportional representation into the electoral system for the 1993 parliamentary election — a move which might make it easier for the Socialists to form a majority with centrists and ecologists.

Mr. Mitterrand said he was sure unpopular Prime Minister Edith Cresson would gain public support once her minority government's measures against unemployment began to bear fruit. He forecast the number of jobless would start to fall next year.

Former President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing said he had always favoured cutting the presidential term to five years, although he did nothing about it during his own seven-year term.

He disputed Mr. Mitterrand's right to amend the constitution by referendum, a tactic which allows him to bypass parliament where the government relies on Communist support in the lower house and faces a right-wing majority in the senate.

Francois Leotard, president of the centre-right Republican Party, said he agreed with the introduction of partial proportional representation but wanted a new election system anchored in the constitution so it could not be changed for reasons of political convenience.

The conservatives restored a two-ballot constituency voting system which favours alliances and handicaps small parties in 1986 after winning a proportional representation parliamentary poll.

## Comic strip about Quayle causes uproar

NEW YORK (AP) — Cartoonist Gary Trudeau has shaken up U.S. newspapers with his Don Quixote comic strip, alleging a cover-up involving Vice President Dan Quayle. The two-week series opening Monday prompted some of the 1,400 newspapers and other publications that buy Don Quixote to compose editor's notes and stories explaining why they will — or won't — run them. Other newspapers did nothing unusual, saying interference would constitute censorship. The critics said Trudeau exceeded the bounds of libel law good taste with unsubstantiated allegations that Mr. Quayle bought cocaine while he was a U.S. senator. One sequence alleges that a U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) file exists on Mr. Quayle and "someone, somewhere covered up the existence of the file," said Lee Salem, editorial director of United Press Syndicate, which distributes Don Quixote. The syndicate said it was satisfied with the satirist's sources. The DEA won't comment, and Mr. Quayle called the strips a Trudeau "vendetta."

Trudeau has shaken up his subscribers before with comic strips portraying bleak living conditions for U.S. soldiers during the Gulf war, alleged mafia ties of Frank Sinatra and the anti-abortion movie The Silent Scream.

## Giant iceberg starts to break up

PORT STANLEY, Falkland Islands (R) — A giant iceberg adrift in the South Atlantic with thousands of penguins has begun to break up in warm waters and will pose a hazard to shipping, meteorologists said. The immense iceberg, codenamed A24, broke away from the Weddell Sea in Antarctica in August. Measuring 35 miles by 35 (90 km by 55), it is now some 580 miles southeast of the Falkland Islands and drifting towards the British colony and South Georgia, into main shipping lanes. "It will continue to break up into thousands of smaller icebergs when it reaches the yet still warmer Atlantic waters and will be a hazard to shipping," said Bob Wickerspin, the principal meteorological officer for the Falklands. He was speaking after a British Air Force C130 plane flew from the Falklands on a reconnaissance mission to track the iceberg's movements. Pilot Al Wallis said thousands of chinstrap penguins were stranded on the main iceberg and smaller satellite bergs, known as "gordons," which had broken off. The main iceberg was 200 feet (60 metres) high above the water line and so large that it was creating its own low cloud and mist, Wallis said.

## Bungling bandit too smashed to grab

LONDON (R) — A bungling bandit who staggered off to rob a post office after an all-day drinking spree was so obvious that children tagged along behind him. A court in Exeter, Southwest England, jailed Frank Sykes, 56, for three years for attempted robbery after hearing how he lurched down the street with a fake revolver and a white stocking over his head with holes cut out to make room for his thick-lensed spectacles. British newspapers dubbed Sykes the pie-eating piper and quoted him as telling police: "If I had got the money I would have gone back and started drinking again."

## Drug dealers using snakes, crocodiles to guard stashes

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Drug dealers are using reptiles to guard their drug stashes. A narcotics officer found a 10-foot (3.1-metre) python wrapped around crack vials and glassine bags under a mattress during a house raid Thursday night. "The way he was screaming, I thought he'd found a mother load of coke (cocaine)," said Police Lt. John Gallo of Officer Jimmy Coles. "But then, I see this huge snake, slithering out from under the mattress, flicking its tongue, heading towards us." The snake was seized along with crack and taken to an animal shelter. The use of large or venomous snakes is the latest tactic of drug dealers, said David Chiszar, a University of Colorado herpetologist. A few drug dealers favour small crocodiles, he said. The reptiles are usually used to dissuade thieves or rival dealers, rather than to scare away police, Mr. Chiszar and Lt. Gallo said. Mr. Chiszar has heard from herpetologists around the world with tales of rattlesnakes, cobras and viper tamed over by police after police raids.

